

# ORDERS OF THE QUEST



V. 1  
**THE ADEPTS**

In the Western Esoteric Tradition

By **MANLY PALMER HALL**

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**ORDERS OF THE QUEST**

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# **The Adepts**

**In The Western Esoteric Tradition**

**By MANLY PALMER HALL**



**Part One**

**Orders Of The Quest**

# ORDERS OF THE QUEST

## FOREWORD

In this outline of the adept tradition as it has descended through the mystical Associations and Fraternities of Europe, we are developing our subject material according to a definite plan. The details and particulars will have fuller meaning if the underlying principles are first appreciated. The present section deals with the period extending from the collapse of the pagan Mysteries to the end of the Age of Chivalry. For practical purposes, the Esoteric Schools, which championed the human cause through the Dark Ages and the medieval world, may be considered together as the Orders of the Quest.

The symbolism and rituals of these Fraternities of the Middle Ages involved a search for something remote or hidden. To succeed in the Quest, the knight or companion (disciple) must dedicate himself to the service of his afflicted and exploited fellow man. He must rescue his own soul—the “fair maiden in distress”—by over-coming the giants, dragons, demons, and wicked nobles who pillaged the countryside. As a reward for these noble pursuits, the Christian and godly knight could aspire to a heavenly vision of spiritual mysteries.

The legends of chivalry are veiled accounts of man's eternal search for truth. These beautiful stories are not, however, merely folklore. They are parts of an orderly tradition, unfolding through the centuries and bearing witness to a well-organized plan and program. Like the myths of classical antiquity, the hero tales are sacred rituals belonging to secret Fraternities perpetuating the esoteric doctrines of antiquity.



An attempt to trace the descent of the adept tradition through these centuries of almost complete secrecy is exceedingly difficult. The initiates could not reveal their true identities, their places of habitation, or the programs they were seeking to advance. Most names which have descended to us are pseudonyms, the locations imaginary or deliberately falsified, and the projects themselves concealed under extravagant fables. Unless the student has some sympathetic grasp of the situation and has trained himself to observe landmarks, he can discover little of genuine significance.

It has seemed advisable, however, to approach the subject in a sober and factual manner. We have purposely avoided such reports and accounts as depend entirely upon extrasensory perception for their validity. We are fully aware of the so-called "clairvoyant investigations" and "secret histories" which are preserved and taught by modern mystical sects. It does not seem necessary to our purpose to either accept or reject these traditions, although their inclusion certainly would add glamour to the narration.

The adept tradition in early Europe is traceable by natural means and normal faculties, if we are prepared to undertake the task and have access to the necessary reference material. It is quite possible to overlook or undervalue obscure details, but these do not impair, certainly they do not discredit, the major premise. There is an incontrovertible mass of evidence indicating the existence of initiated philosophers possessing a superior knowledge of divine and natural laws. There is also sufficient proof that these initiates were the agents of a World Fraternity or Brotherhood of Adepts that has existed from the most remote time. This overfraternity has been called the Philosophic Empire, the Great School, the College of the Holy Spirit, and the

Invisible Government of the World. References to this sovereign body of "the ancient ones of the earth" occur in the sacred writings, the philosophical literature, and the mystical traditions of all the races and nations of mankind.

We have selected from the most reputable sources vestiges relating to the Academy of the Adepts. The reader is invited to consider these fragments, to examine their contents, and to discover for himself the veritable accounts which they conceal. We believe that the thoughtful and discriminating student will have little difficulty in recognizing the essential landmarks. We further believe that he will come to understand why we have referred to the stream of the secret doctrine as Humanism. The term is not used in its popular sense, but to describe the grand program of the Mystery Schools for the emancipation of man from bondage to ignorance, superstition, and fear.

Civilization is unfolding according to a predetermined plan, and not by accident and fortuitous circumstance. This plan does not limit the individual to any creed or doctrine, but invites him to recognize those essential disciplines by which he can attain internal security for himself and can contribute to the final emancipation of all men. The adepts are the philosophic-elect—the priest-kings and the shepherds of the herds of human souls. During enlightened ages, they have appeared as venerated teachers, social reformers, seers, and prophets. In benighted times, their leadership has taken on various appearances, but its substance is unchanging and unchangeable. We have distinguished three important divisions in the European descent of the Mysteries: first, the *Orders of the Quest*; second, the *Orders of the Great Work*, and third, the *Orders of Universal Reformation*. The first group was dedicated to the restoration of the secret sciences through search and discovery. The second group was devoted to the proof and

personal accomplishment of that which was known to be true. And the third group was resolved to apply the proven principles of the esoteric tradition to the enlargement, restoration, and reformation of collective society.

If the reader may wonder why we do not attempt to reveal the names, lives, and particular accomplishments of the Masters of the Quest, in this way supplying glamorous biographies of real or suspected adepts of the period, let him pause for a moment and consider. These initiates neither required nor desired the aggrandizement of their persons. Like all worthy men and women, they preferred to be honored through their work, and submerged their identities in their programs so completely that their personalities have become one with their principles. Such biographical material as is available is nearly always mythical and symbolical. What we take to be an account of the men themselves is merely the record of their advancement in the sacred Orders.

In later centuries we have some details about the initiates; but during the period of the Quest, we do well, indeed, if we can identify certain outstanding Humanists with the Secret Societies, which were the proper custodians of the great descent. Our purpose is accomplished if we can convey some general realization of the motions of the Philosophic Empire, from the complete secrecy of its origin to its final emergence as the natural government of the world.

MANLY PALMER HALL

Los Angeles, California; March 1949.



# THE ADEPTS

## ORDERS OF THE QUEST

### *The Sons of the Widow*

In the 3rd century after Christ, a Persian mystic, born in the faith of Zoroaster and inspired by the doctrines of the Chaldeans, preached a religious philosophy which was to influence the entire course of Western civilization. Manes, or Mani, proclaimed himself the Paraclete, the Comforter promised by Christ to his disciples. The true name of this Persian sage was Shuraik (in Latin, Cubricus), but after his initiation he took the name Manes, which, according to Plutarch, means The Anointed.

Manes, the founder of the Manichæan sect, was born in Babylon, A. D. 215-16. He received his early education from his father, a devoutly religious man, whose spiritual convictions were influenced by Mandaean, Gnostic, and Christian associations. There are also indications that both father and son had a familiarity with the teachings of Sabianism. Later, Manes traveled extensively, was a voluminous writer, and a profound student of the religions of Transoxiana, India, and Western China.\*

Manes was an initiate of the Mysteries of Mithras, and among his teachers was Terebinthus, an Egyptian philosopher and magician. There is a tradition that Manes was

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\* See *Faiths of Man*, by Major General J. G. R. Forlong.



at one time a Christian, but this the Church has emphatically denied. It is certain, however, that he contacted early heretical sects, and was also cognizant of the cabalistical speculations of the Jewish mystics. He regarded the philosophical systems of the pagan sages as superior to both Judaism and primitive Christianity. He proclaimed his own ministry at the court of the Persian King, Shapur I, (A. D. 240-42), possibly on the coronation day of that monarch.

The career of the prophet Manes made many demands upon his courage and devotion, but he faced the disasters of his life sustained by internal visions and mystical experiences. He was unable to maintain a favorable position in the Persian court due to the pressure exerted against him by the priests of Zoroaster. He acquired some distinction as a physician, but his skill was not sufficient to preserve the life of one of the sons of the ruling prince. His prestige undermined, Manes was exiled through the contrivances of the Mazdians, and he undertook his memorable journeys. During this same period, he lived for a year in a cave, with only wild herbs for food.

Later, Manes was recalled to Persia by a more generous prince, was received with great honors, and a palace was erected for his use. For a brief time his fortunes flourished, and he was consulted on important matters of state. But when Bahram I ascended the throne, the prophet fell upon evil times. Bahram, for political reasons, supported the Zoroastrian clergy, and these were resolved to destroy the heretical sect and its founder. Manes was crucified and flayed alive (A. D. 276-77), and his body was exposed to various indignities.

The doctrine of Manes was rooted in Persian dualism, but he drew essential dogmas from the various schools of

Southern Europe, Mesopotamia, North Africa, and Central Asia. The Manichaeans practiced the sacraments of baptism and communion. They accepted the ministry of Christ, but not the divinity of Jesus. Manes condemned the Christians as worshipers of idols, declaring that they had substituted men for gods, and then images for men. The sect, however, admired St. Paul, and acknowledged *Jesus Impatibalis*, the Christ within that was the hope of glory.

After the death of Manes, the progress of the sect was entrusted to a circle of initiates, and these defined the degrees of the Order, its initiatory rites, signs, symbols, and passwords. The broad esoteric foundation of Manichaeism appealed to scholars of all beliefs, including the better-informed Christians. Salomon Reinach gives the following valuable summary of the history of the sect: "The Manichaeans were gentle and peaceable persons; this was the opinion of the Greek philosopher Libanius. But as they rejected the rites of existing Churches, and claimed to confine themselves to the ministrations of their own priests, those of other religions persecuted them furiously, and excited the mob against them by calumnies. When it was first attacked in Persia, Manicheism spread toward Turkestan, India and China, and at the same time towards Africa by way of Syria and Egypt. Diocletian prohibited it in A. D. 290, and the Christian Emperors from A. D. 377 onward legislated against it; the Vandals burnt or exiled the Manichaeans. African Manicheism is known to us chiefly through the works of St. Augustine, who wrote long treatises against its doctors, after having been their pupil. In the east, the sect was almost exterminated by the severity of Justinian, but it formed again in Asia Minor. We read of the *Paulitians* in Armenia (seventh to twelfth centuries), the *Bogomiles* in Thrace (tenth to eleventh century). The

Byzantine Emperors, Alexis Comnenus in particular, pursued these inoffensive sectaries with fire and sword. In the eleventh century Manicheism, brought by the commerce of the Levant, penetrated into Southern France, and gave rise to the powerful sect of the *Cathari*, who were exterminated by the Inquisition.”\*

Heckethorn extends this history with many interesting details. He notes: “By changing its name, seat, and figurative language, Manichaeism spread in Bulgaria, Lombardy (Patarini), France (Cathari, Albigenses), etc., united with the Saracens, and openly made war upon the Emperor, and its followers perished by thousands in battle and at the stake; and from its secular trunk sprang the so-called heresies of the Hussites and Wyckiffites, which opened the way for Protestantism.”†

The same author then establishes the Templars and Freemasons in the Manichaeian descent, and concludes by showing how their doctrines were echoed in the songs of the Troubadours and the covenants of the guilds. From the Societies, Fraternities, and Orders which perpetuated the esoteric doctrine of the Manichaeans, we gain considerable insight into the essential teachings of the sect. They believed in a primitive religion ever-existing in the world, of which formal theologies were corrupted forms. They held that enlightened and purified love was the highest of human emotions, and manifested as a simple and natural love for God in heaven above and for man on the earth below.

The practical religion of love was expressed through kindness, friendliness, tolerance, and patience. The wise man became the protector or father of those less informed than himself. Only those who truly loved their fellow men

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\*See *Orpheus, a History of Religions*.

†See *Secret Societies of All Ages*.



and proved that affection through the defense of the rights of man were entitled to regard themselves as religious. The secret assemblage of the Manichaeans was dedicated to the liberation of the human being from all despotism and tyranny. The end to be attained was an enduring brotherhood of mankind. Men should be ruled by love alone and should love their rulers. Leaders should deserve this affection, and all kingdoms and nations should dwell together in peace, governed by just laws and noble examples. All tyranny must end; all false doctrines must fall when the light of truth—the Christ within—is acknowledged as the Universal Redeemer.

St. Augustine was drawn to Manichaeism because it interpreted the Christian religion in terms acceptable to his inquiring mind. He had already decided that the Church was ridden with superstition and lacked philosophic depth. He remained absorbed in this so-called heresy for nine years, but was never able to penetrate deeply enough into the mysticism of the sect to overlook the shortcomings of the members. Certainly his subsequent opinions were influenced by his associations with the followers of Manes. He departed from them through a disinterest in mysticism, for which his intellect was not suited.

The Church, in the treatment of the Manichaeans, followed its usual procedure of accusing all heretical groups of practicing immoral and infernal rites. St. Augustine, who had an intimate knowledge of the sect, made no such accusations. His temperament would have inclined him to do so had there been any reasonable grounds. After departing from the heresy of Manes, St. Augustine came under the influence of Bishop Ambrose, a fine and noble man addicted to the teachings of Origen. Origen now stands precariously on the borderline of heresy, for he him-

self was influenced by Gnosticism, Neoplatonism, and, incredible as it may seem, by the doctrine of Manes.

Some of the writings of Manes have survived, and from them we learn their concept of the Divine Nature: "The spirit of God is Light, radiant with the virtue of love, faith, fidelity, high-mindedness, wisdom, meekness, knowledge, understanding, mystery, and insight." Leo the Great decided that such a belief should be stamped out lest the creed of the Church be extinguished. This pontiff also found it embarrassing to contemplate the idea that in the spiritual succession Jesus was succeeded by Manes, who was the last and greatest of the prophets emanated from the Divine, and who was the ambassador of the Light of the World.

One of the annual rituals of the Manichaeans was celebrated to commemorate the crucifixion of the prophet. This consisted of placing a chair on a platform with five steps. Those members of the Order who had purified themselves for the occasion were permitted to kneel before this empty chair which symbolized the "unseen Master" of their sect. This empty chair is reminiscent of the vacant throne of Osiris, in the Egyptian initiatory ritual. The followers of Manes were called "the Sons of the Widow" and the founder himself was referred to as "the Widow's Son." The popular story that Manes gained this title by being redeemed from slavery by a rich widow is about as plausible as the legend that the Order of the Garter was created in honor of the Countess of Salisbury's garter.

Horus, the savior-god of the Osirian mysteries of Egypt, was a "Widow's Son." He was posthumously conceived by the holy spirit of Osiris, his murdered father. The ghost of Osiris overshadowed his sister-wife, Isis, who had dressed herself in widow's weeds to lament her dead husband. Horus, thus strangely and immaculately conceived,

was destined to become the "hero of the world" and the avenger of his father. In fact, it was believed by some that Horus was possessed by the spirit of his own father. The hieroglyphic of Osiris is the All-seeing-Eye combined with the Empty Throne. Isis is the Virgin of the World, who bears the divine child without the loss of her virginity. She is the esoteric tradition which gives birth to the adepts by a mystery "in the spirit." She is the Sophia of the Gnosis, the "blessed demoiselle" of the Troubadours and the later mystics. In Christian and neo-Christian symbolism, Sophia appears again as the "Bride of the Lamb."

Manes, therefore, was not literally a widow's son, for his father survived to assist in his education. He had attained the second birth; that is, he had been born out of the womb of the Mysteries, and those of his followers who had received the initiation were identified in the same way. By his martyrdom Manes became another Osiris, Lord of the Empty Throne. He overshadowed his Order as a spirit, and from the sanctuary of Manes were born new sons to extend his doctrines, thus becoming in a mystical sense the re-embodiment of himself. Deprived of their Master, the body of the Manichaeans was appropriately symbolized by the legend of Isis mourning for her martyred Lord.

### *The Albigenses.*

In order to appreciate the degree of organized resistance that developed in Europe against the remnants of the pagan philosophical schools, it is only necessary to consider the fate of the Albigensian heretics. The sect originated in Manichaeism, a school of esoteric philosophy which exercised a considerable influence over the early life of St. Augustine. Later this pious man devoted much time and many words to a bitter denunciation of the heresiarch Manes. It is probable that the Albigenses originated in



Bulgaria, but their principal stronghold was in Southern France, where they created a considerable stir during the 12th and 13th centuries.

So thoroughly were the Albigensian doctrines stamped out by the Roman Church that it is almost impossible to restore the structure of their beliefs. We know that they were Catharists believing in the ultimate salvation of all men. They were devout Christians but rejected the machinery of the Church, and taught that any who died without being reconciled to God through the mystery of Christ would be born again in the physical world as a human being or an animal. The Catharists baptized by the laying on of hands, and taught that the kingdom of Christ was a mystery of the spirit and not of this world.

The Albigenses also derived inspiration from the Bogomiles, a religious community of considerable antiquity which inspired many of the unorthodox sects of Russia. The Bogomiles denied the miraculous birth of Christ, rejected most of the sacraments of the Church, baptized only adults, had no formal places of worship, and interpreted the miracles of Jesus mystically rather than literally. They had the quaint notion that Satan was responsible for setting up all the churches of Christendom as a means of destroying human souls.

It is quite understandable that in 1209 Pope Innocent III obliged the Cistercians to preach a crusade against the Albigensian heretics. In the civil war that followed, the Provençal civilization was destroyed, but the Albigenses survived. About thirty years later the Inquisition stepped in with better success.

Maurice Magre writes of the Albigenses thus: "I feel indignant at a great injustice which has never been remedied and seems unlikely to be remedied. Those self-

controlled unassuming men who lived in Southern France during the 13th century, whose practical rule was poverty and whose ideal was love of their fellowmen, were exterminated, and calumny has triumphantly wiped out even their name and their memory. Calumny has been so active and so skillful that the descendants of these wonderful men are unaware of the noble history of their ancestors, and when they wish to learn it, it is presented in such a fashion that they blush at their extraordinary past.”\*

It seems that some of the Catharist communities practiced a mode of life strongly reminiscent of the Syrian Essenes. C. W. Heckethorn gives us an excellent summary of their doctrine and conduct: “In spite of the Church many Italian cities including Milan, Florence, Naples, and even Rome itself were centers of Cathari activity. A Cathari concealed its doctrine from all but its higher initiates. It taught metempsychosis assuming that to attain the light seven such transmigrations were required. This however may possibly refer to the degrees of their initiation. They rejected the Old Testament account of the creation, and had communistic tendencies; were adverse to marriage; were philanthropists; they lived industrious lives, combining saving habits with charity; founded schools and hospitals. . . . They performed their ceremonies in forests, caverns and remote valleys. At his initiation the novice received a garment made of fine linen and wool which he wore under his shirt. The women received a girdle which they wore next to the skin above the waist.”†

The same author describes the fate of Dolcino, one of the leaders of the Italian Catharists. He and his wife Margaret were pursued by the Inquisition in 1307. They were captured and torn to pieces, limb by limb, and the

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\*See *Magicians, Seers, and Mystics*.

†See *Secret Societies of All Ages and Countries* (London, 1897).



pieces afterwards burned by the public executioner. Fifteen years later, thirty of Dolcino's disciples were burned alive in the market place at Padua. The remnants of these so-called heretical movements found some refuge in Eastern Europe in areas which came under the political domination of the Turks.

Under the general name Albigenses, these several schools of primitive and mystical Christianity bestowed their life and vitality upon the Knights Templars, the Rosicrucians, and later, by descent, upon the Bavarian Illuminists. The Crusaders brought back to Europe the Eastern Manichaeism with its rationalizing and moderating influences. Reforms long overdue began to stir beneath the surface of the medieval world. As one writer has expressed it: "Philosophy, republicanism, and industry assailed the Holy See."

It is known that the inner council of the Albigenses consisted of initiates whose method of development was not dissimilar to that of the Gnostics or the Neoplatonists. These initiates were internally enlightened men, dedicated to the perpetuation of Plato's concepts of the Philosophic Empire and the philosopher-king. Only those who lived the Christian life could know the Christian doctrine. By the end of the 14th century the sect disappeared entirely, and such physical power as it may have been said to enjoy was entirely destroyed. This so-called power was simply an appeal to virtue, and at no time did the sect exhibit any physical ambitions other than those of justice, charity, and humility.

It is certain that the adepts of the Albigenses, Catharists, and Bogomiles did not perish with the fall of their schools. Such a sacrifice would have accomplished nothing of practical benefit to mankind. They chose to remain hidden and to create new channels for the dissemination of their

doctrines. These channels changed their appearances to meet the requirements of time and place. Thus, there is no break in the esoteric descent of essential truths even though the physical institutions were destroyed by the fanaticism and cruelty of an unbelieving world.

### *The Glory of the Guilds*

It is now fairly well-established that the art of paper-making was brought to Europe from the Near East by the Crusaders returning from the Holy Land, or by the Moors who established their culture in Spain. Indications seem to point to China as the country responsible for the invention of paper. Harold Bayley opens a large subject when he writes: "It is a fact, the significance of which has hitherto been unnoticed, that the early papermaking districts were precisely those that were strongholds of the heretical sects known as the Albigenses. The word 'Albigenses' is a term applied loosely to the various pre-Reformation reformers whose stronghold stretched from Northern Spain across the southern provinces of France from Lombardy to Tuscany."\*

Papermaking opened the way for printing in Europe. Printing from movable type also was invented in China or Korea at least two hundred years before its appearance in Europe. The histories of European papermaking and printing are exceedingly vague. Almost nothing is known of the circumstances leading to the production of books in the West. Bayley made an extensive study of the water-marks, head pieces, and colophons appearing in early books. He is convinced that these indicate the existence of a secret religious tradition or spiritual communion by which these artisans constituted an esoteric Fraternity or Brotherhood.

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\*See *A New Light on the Renaissance*.

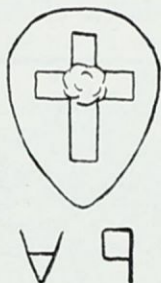
The persecution of the Albigenses scattered the Masters of the sect over the entire Continent. The higher initiates of the Albigenses were called the Perfect Ones; and, according to one writer, in the year A.D. 1240 at least four thousand of these Perfect Ones were wandering about Europe in various disguises as troubadours, peddlers, merchants, and journeymen. These artisans and craftsmen established themselves in their chosen crafts and trades, and from them descended many distinguished printing establishments. That these printers were members of a Secret Order explains a situation otherwise completely incredible.

In the great period of the publication of books and tracts dealing with alchemy, cabalism, magic, Rosicrucianism, and the projected reformation of the arts and sciences, an unusual situation arose. Most of the books were published anonymously or under pseudonyms. In many cases elaborate ciphers were incorporated into the text, and curious emblems and symbolical figures were introduced. Such an elaborate program, involving printers in several countries operating with extreme secrecy, would not have been possible without the complete co-operation of the printers themselves. In spite of bribery, threat, and persecution, the printers revealed neither the sources of the manuscripts which they published nor the true names of the authors. If it can be proved, as present indications suggest, that the printers, typesetters, and engravers were themselves citizens of the same Invisible Commonwealth as the authors, philosophers, mystics, and scholars, the dimensions of the project become clearly defined.

Take, for example, the famous "jug" watermark found in the paper on which most of the first editions of the writings of Lord Bacon were printed. This jug recurs also in many of the publications involved in the early Rosicrucian controversy. The jug is a vase or pitcher, sometimes shown



filled with fruit or grapes. Bayley believes that this vase or pitcher is the Holy Grail. He supports his conviction with many ingenious examples of this vase which can be traced directly to the Albigensian papermakers. In my library is a copy of Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* with the vase watermark. On one leaf only—the dedication page—appears an entirely different watermark, consisting of a heart that contains within it a crucified rose. This is a complete Rosicrucian emblem, and the book itself contains references to the Rosicrucians.



WATERMARK DEVICE

From dedication page of the 1628 edition of *The Anatomy of Melancholy*.

Those who doubt the existence of hidden texts within certain books of the late 16th and early 17th centuries have always objected on the grounds that printers would have to be a party to the secret texts, and could not have been prevented from exposing the facts in the course of time. Also, a vast amount of labor which would have been extremely costly would necessarily be involved. If, however, the printers were performing a labor of love and were themselves initiates of a Secret Order, these objections are no longer valid.

After the invention of printing, the myths, legends, and fables of the Troubadours and jongleurs gradually drifted toward their final published forms. In almost every in-

stance, the so-called authors of these curious works merely acted as editors or compilers of earlier fictions. The mediæval mind was not addicted to fictional literature such as is popular in the present century. Most works in a lighter vein were morality fables or else were burdened with social or political significance. Most of these slighter productions were tinged with heresy, and perpetuated the Humanism of the *trouveres*.

The *Ship of Fools*, first printed in Germany in 1494, is an early example of a school of satirical writing attacking the prevailing foibles and follies of the day. Little is known



THE SHIP OF FOOLS

From the enlarged edition published in Paris, 1500.

of Alexander Barclay, who is credited with the authorship of this outstanding poem. The spirit of the book reflects an intellectual transition from mental surfdom to that state of intellectual revolution which made possible the right of free thought.

Although but little read in these days, the beast-epic, *Reynard the Fox*, which originated apparently in France near the border of Flanders, was one of the most popular

works of folklore. Harold Bayley writes of this cycle of animal stories thus: "The stories of how Reynard the Fox outwitted his traditional enemy, Isengrim the Wolf, were popular in Europe for many centuries. If we substitute *Heresy* for Reynard, and *Rome* for Isengrim, we can understand why these seemingly childish stories enjoyed such an immense vogue. 'These Heretic foxes,' percipiently said Gregory IX, 'have differnt faces, but they all hang together by the tails.' " Unfortunately, the French originals of the stories are lost, but it is safe to assume that they originated in the 13th century among those same Troubadours who found so many adroit means of discomfiting the monkish Orders.

The "Dance of Death" is the name generally given to a series of pictures and moral compositions intended to remind the thoughtful of the impermanence of material dignities and honors. The symbolism originated in pagan antiquity, but the development of the theme is now associated with Swiss artists working in Basel in the late 13th and early 14th centuries. This version of *la danse macabre* is referred to as the Basel recension.

It seems to me that this cycle of morality emblems is part of the Humanist motion. All the designs point to death as the destroyer of the artificial preferments bestowed by wealth, heredity, and political conspiracy. The rich and the poor, the great and the small, the high and the low are called from their various preoccupations by the drums of death. No one is immune, and thus all ambitions are part of the passing vanity of the world. The pictures preached a powerful message against privileged classes, and recommended that the human being dedicate his life to the accumulation of those spiritual treasures which could not be taken from him by the capering skeleton. In death, the Pope and the peasant, the king and the beggar danced to-



gether to the pipes of the unwelcome musician.

The English legendary hero, Robin Hood, the last of the Saxons, arose in the first half of the 14th century. This bold yeoman is said to have flourished at the time of Richard Coeur de Lion; and as the legends grew, this outlaw became the culture hero of the *bourgeoisie*, as King Arthur was the culture hero of the aristocracy. Robin Hood was an operating Humanist. Not only was he a Saxon against the Normans, but he stole from the rich and



—From *A New Light on the Renaissance*  
 PRINTER'S ORNAMENT

Representing the Court of Love of the Troubadours, in the form of a walled garden with strange flowers. The mystic rose dominates the design.

gave to the poor. He was devoutly religious, but found immense satisfaction in plaguing plump abbots and pompous clerics of all degrees. He stood for the free life, and was distinctly the "superman" of his day. Here, again, the storytellers preached a gospel of equality and democracy,

and strengthened that love of liberty in the hearts of all just men. Maid Marian appears much as in the romances of the Troubadours; and in the development of the Secret Fraternity of the Greenwood, we have a parallel with the Courts of Love and Honor, sung by the minstrels of Brittany and Provence.

Usually the printers included secret marks in their books or engravings to indicate the presence of a cipher or double meaning. Large and intricate initial letters, including curious designs, sometimes served the same purpose. Most of the enigmas and rebuses have never been solved because of the prevailing indifference to the motives behind the motions of history. Even where it is suspected, as in the case of *Gulliver's Travels*, that a satire was intended, it is assumed that the author wrote entirely on his own responsibility according to his own taste. It has not occurred to bibliophiles generally that the writers themselves might be bound into a secret league and be operating according to a formal plan.

We should pause to consider the bookbinders, for these men also belonged to a guild, and were in a position to perpetuate many curious emblems and figures on the covers of books. Unfortunately, bindings are more fragile than the contents of the volumes, and only in museums and very large private collections can the student examine a representative group of original 15th- and 16th-century bookbindings. The traditional designs and ornaments include symbols known to have belonged to the Albigensian cult and the Secret Societies dominating the transitional period in European culture.

As the result of a certain confraternity which included within itself the various trade guilds, other landmarks were left to guide the observing searcher. European public buildings, especially cathedrals, libraries, and tombs, were



adorned with innumerable devices in no way parts of the approved designs. Often these embellishments were concealed in obscure places, but scarcely a medieval structure has survived which does not include the symbols and signatures of the Secret Societies. The conspiracy extended through the entire world of the arts. This broad dissemination was only possible because the separate guilds and unions were aware of the high purpose for which the guild system had been established.

The guilds formed a link between the Troubadours and the trade unions. The trade unions were societies of artisans nourished by the apprentice system. The secrets of various arts and crafts were jealously guarded by the guild Masters, whose arms and crests dangled from hooks around the great Guild Cup in the midst of their Lodge. This Guild Cup was again the Chalice of Bacchus, the Holy Grail, and the symbolical Cup of the Mysteries.

The guild Masters used the language of their crafts to conceal the mysticism of the great Humanist Reformation. Each guild taught the Universal Mystery in the language of its own art. Thus, within architectural terms, the stonemasons concealed the building of the universal temple of the brotherhood of man. The guild system took deep roots in Germany, but was also well-established in other countries on the Continent, and in England. So far as the world knew, the guilds were simply trade unions, but there was scarcely one of them which was not influenced to some degree by the old heresy of Manes.

It is difficult to distinguish the details of the transition which resulted in the emergence of the German Minnesingers from the older body of the Bards and the Troubadours. The term *Minnesang* (*minne*, meaning love) was originally applied to the song or poem written by a knight to express his passionate devotion to the mistress of his

heart. It was not long, however, before the term took on a wider meaning to include all music and poetry: religious, political, and amorous.

The principles of the Minnesang reached Germany from Provence, which was one of the last strongholds of the Albigensian Troubadours. The kings of Provence were patrons of the arts, and under their protection there was a brief flowering of song and poetry. Most of the Minnesingers were drawn from the ranks of the gentry, and it was only natural that the less-privileged classes should develop their version of the same convictions. Out of the Minnesingers, with their combination of mournful tunes, and also from the music of the peasantry evolved the Meistersingers, the burgher musicians of Germany. For the most part, the Order was composed of artisans, good solid citizens, with long coats, square-toed shoes, and orthodox religious convictions. They were good, practical men, hard-working, shrewd, and skillful in their crafts. Few, if any, had received formal education in music, and their talents were natural rather than acquired.

The long shadow of the Manichaean doctrine reached into the guildhalls and even into the somber cloisters of the cathedrals. The guilds were champions of the human cause, institutions of fair play and honest practice. They were co-operatives, protecting their members from society in general, and protecting society from shoddy goods and unreasonable exploitation. In a quiet way, the guild masters legislated the life of the times, and these solid, good-hearted citizens endeavored in all things to judge righteous judgment. What better place could be found in which to plant the seeds of the democratic dream? From these small centers of self-government might flow the concept of the World Guild, the World Commonwealth, indeed the Philosophic Empire.

The Meistersingers declared their Order to have originated with twelve guild poets, who had derived their inspiration from the Troubadours and the Minnesingers. The very selection of this number and its use in their symbolism suggests that the Order originated in the old Mystery systems, which always celebrated twelve gods, twelve prophets, twelve patriarchs, or twelve disciples. When we attempt to trace the twelve guild poets of the Middle High German, we come immediately upon the most celebrated name associated with the Minnesang, Wolfram von Eschenbach. He competed in the tourney of the poets known as the Wartsburgskrieg. This episode is preserved for music lovers in Wagner's opera, *Tannhauser*. The place occupied by von Eschenbach in the descent of the Orders of the Quest will be given greater consideration in the sections devoted to the Grail legends.

### *The Knights Templars*

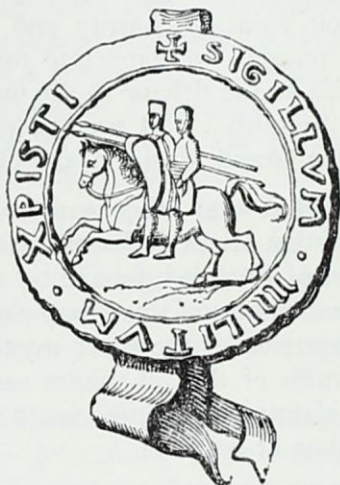
In *Isis Unveiled*, H. P. Blavatsky refers to the Knights Templars as "the last European secret organization which, as a body, had in its possession some of the mysteries of the East." A few paragraphs later she adds: "They revered the doctrines of alchemy, astrology, magic, kabalistic talismans, and adhered to the secret teachings of their chiefs in the East."

The Order of Knights Templars was founded in 1118 by Hugh de Payen and Geoffrey of St. Omer, together with seven other French knights then stationed in Palestine. These gentlemen were motivated by a determination to guard the roads of Christian pilgrimage to the shrine of the Holy Land. During the first nine years of the Order, the Templars lived in extreme poverty. Hugh de Payen and Geoffrey of St. Omer had but one war horse between them. This circumstance was perpetuated on the great seal



of the Templars, which consisted of two knights seated on one charger. The influence of the Order increased rapidly, for it appealed to the concepts of chivalry which dominated the minds of the time. In 1128 the Council of Troyes graciously acknowledged its motives and principles, and St. Bernard prepared a code for the spiritual and temporal guidance of the knights.

Pope Honorius confirmed the Order of the Temple, and appointed a white mantle as the distinguishing habit. Later Eugenius III added a red cross to be worn affixed to the



SEAL OF THE KNIGHTS TEMPLARS

breast. They also had a banner made of stripes of red and black cloth. The members were bound by severe obligations. They took vows of poverty, ate only the coarsest of foods, and were denied the simplest of pleasures, even those of the hunt. When not warring against the enemies of Christ and the Church, they lived in monastic seclusion in the various houses of retreat which had been assigned to them. Here they divided their attentions between such

religious activities as prayer and penance, and such practical concerns as "furbishing their armor and mending their clothes." They were forbidden the common military recreation of gambling, and could not even play chess.

Candidates for initiation gave all their property and personal goods to the Order. Thus, while each was individually poor, the body as a whole became enormously rich. The principal officer of the Templars was the Grand Master, and, as the worldly estates of the body increased, he ranked as a prince at all the courts of Europe. Each new member took vows of chastity and obedience. "I swear," said the novice, "to consecrate my thoughts, my energy, and my life, to the defense of the unity of God and the mysteries of the faith. . . . I promise to be submissive and obedient to the Grand Master of the Order."\*

Eliphas Levi and several other authors and historians advance the belief that Hugh de Payens had been initiated into a strange sect of Christian Johannites then flourishing in the East. The members of this group claimed that they alone were in possession of the inner mysteries of Christ. The supreme pontiffs of the Johannites assumed the title of "Christ" and claimed an uninterrupted transmission of power from the days of St. John.

Dr. Oliver points out that many Secret Associations of the ancients either flourished or originated in Syria. It was here the Dionysian Artificers, the Essenes, and the Kasideans arose. In a work published in 1855, Dr. Oliver says: "We are assured, that, notwithstanding the unfavorable conditions of that province, there exists, at this day, on Mount Libanus, one of these Syriac Fraternities. As the Order of the Templars, therefore, was originally formed in Syria, and

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\*See *Royal Masonic Cyclopaedia*, by Kenneth R. H. Mackenzie.

existed there for a considerable time, it would be no improbable supposition that they received their Masonic knowledge from the Lodges in that quarter. But we are fortunately in this case not left to conjecture, for we are expressly informed by a foreign author,\* who was well acquainted with the history and customs of Syria, that the Knights Templars were actually members of the Syriac Fraternities.”†

To understand the forces operating behind the Knights Templars, it is necessary to examine the doctrines of the Johannite Order of Oriental Christians. They seemed to have derived inspiration from the Nazarenes and certain Gnostic sects that denied the divinity of Christ, but acknowledged Jesus to be a great and holy prophet. They rejected utterly the Immaculate Conception and other cardinal tenets of the Western Church. The Johannites claimed to possess ancient records to the effect that when Jesus was a small child he was adopted by a Rabbi named Joseph, who carried him into Egypt where he was initiated into the occult sciences. The priests of Osiris, regarding him as the long-promised incarnation of Horus expected by the adepts, finally consecrated him Sovereign-Pontiff of the universal religion.

At the time of Hugh de Payen, Theocletes was the living “Christ” of the Johannites. He communicated to the founders of the Temple the ideas of a sovereign priesthood of dedicated and initiated men united for the purpose of overthrowing the bishops of Rome and the establishment of universal civil liberty. The secret object of the Johannites was the restoration of the esoteric tradition and the gathering of mankind under the one eternal religion of the world.

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\*Adler in *Drusis Montis Libani* (Rome, 1786).

†See *The History and Illustrations of Freemasonry Compiled From an Ancient Publication* (New York, 1855).



Thus, from the beginning, the knights of the Temple served two doctrines. One was concealed from all except the leaders and certain trusted members; the other, publicly stated and practiced for the sake of appearances, conformed with the regulations of the Church. Although some opponents declared that the Templars were seeking to dominate European civilization and establish their own sovereignty



JACQUE DE MOLAY

The last Grand Master of the Knights Templars

over both Church and State, like the Teutonic Knights of Prussia or the Hospitalers of Malta, these accusations reveal a complete ignorance of the secret philosophy of the Temple. Historians have pointed out that these knights disturbed the kingdom of Palestine by their rivalry with the Hospitalers, concluded leagues with the infidels, made war upon Cyprus and Antiochia, dethroned the king of Jerusalem, Henry II, devastated Greece and Thrace, refused to contribute to the ransom of St. Louis, and declared for

Aragon against Anjou, an unpardonable crime in the eyes of France. Nothing is said, however, of the corruption that flourished among the institutions which the Templars opposed. At worst, they could be guilty only of counter-conspiracy, for Christendom at that time was devoted to a grand conspiracy against the parts of itself.

Jacque de Molay, the last Grand Master of the Temple, was elected in 1297. Historians agree that this French knight was a man of noble character, and conducted himself in an estimable manner throughout the difficult and tragic years of his rulership. Writers with various personal attitudes have advanced several explanations for the circumstances which led to the persecution and destruction of the Order of the Temple. When all the elements of the story have been examined, it appears that their greater crimes were those of being wealthy and powerful. The French king, Philip the Fair, and the Roman Pope, Clement V, were resolved to destroy the Knights Templars and divide the treasures of the Order between themselves.

The persecution of the Templars, thinly veiled under ecclesiastical and secular trials and convictions, extended over a period of approximately six years, and Jacque de Molay was imprisoned five and a half years before his execution. During this time the Grand Master, together with most of his officers and more prominent knights, was subjected to indescribable tortures. Many died of pain and exhaustion, and some, unable to endure further suffering, confessed to the crimes with which they had been charged. A number of these, however, later retracted their confessions and died gallantly, rather than to perjure their immortal souls to preserve their bodies.

Typical of the means employed to destroy the Temple is the manner in which the first charges were made. Two criminals, both former Templars who had been expelled



from the Order for heresy and other offenses, were languishing in prison. These men, to obtain their own liberation, resolved to accuse the Templars of monstrous offenses against the Church and State. According to their charges, the Order denied Christ, the Virgin, and the saints; practiced idolatry, cannibalism, witchcraft, debaucheries, and abominations. The two miserable men were released from prison as a reward for their lies, but they gained little from their liberty. One was afterward hanged, and the other, beheaded. It was upon such perjured testimony that the most magnificent Order of Chivalry was reduced to ashes.

De Molay must have realized from the beginning of the elaborate series of trials that justice had no place in the procedures. The Order was doomed from the beginning, and on the 18th of March 1314, he stood before the cardinal of Alba and heard the sentence of perpetual imprisonment. When the cardinal began a detailed account of the guilt of the Templars based upon confessions obtained by torture, the Grand Master interrupted him with a sweeping denial: "I know the punishments which have been inflicted on all the knights who had the courage to revoke a similar confession; but the dreadful spectacle which is presented to me is not able to make me confirm one lie by another. The life offered to me on such infamous terms I abandon without regret."

The commissioners were confounded, for they believed that torture and imprisonment had broken the spirit of the Templars. Guy, the Grand Preceptor of the Temple, then spoke echoing the sentiments of the Grand Master. When King Philip learned the course that events were taking, his rage knew no bounds, and, without even recourse to the procedure of the ecclesiastical court, he decreed that the knights should be immediately burned at the stake. The following day (according to some authorities, late the same

night) the Grand Master and the Grand Preceptor were brought to a small island in the River Seine, opposite the king's garden, and chained to posts, around which had been heaped a quantity of charcoal. The fuel had been arranged to burn slowly, so that the condemned men would suffer the maximum pain and distress.

After the fires had been lighted, de Molay addressed the huge assemblage with these prophetic words: "France will remember our last moments. We die innocent. The decree that condemns us is an unjust decree, but in heaven there is an august tribunal, to which the weak never appeal in vain. To that tribunal, within forty days, I summon the Roman Pontiff. Oh! Philip, my king, I pardon thee in vain, for thy life is condemned at the tribunal of God. Within a year I await thee."

The pontiff was stricken by an obscure ailment and actually died on the 19th day of the following month. The Church in which his body was placed took fire, and the corpse was half consumed. King Philip, before the year had elapsed, also departed from this world in misery and great pain. Most of the active persecutors of the Order perished by premature or violent deaths—events which caused widespread consternation.

There is a legend held by some authorities and rejected by others that in 1314 Jacque de Molay, realizing that his end was near, appointed Johannes Marcus Lormenius to be his successor. It is pointed out that the election of Lormenius can be questioned, because the Order was unable to install him by the usual procedure. But extreme circumstances justified extreme measures, and the charter, bearing the signatures of the proper persons, is said to be still preserved in Paris.

Levi gives a slightly different account. According to him, de Molay organized and instituted Occult Masonry.

"Within the walls of his prison he founded four Metropolitan Lodges—at Naples for the East, Edinburg for the West, Stockholm for the North, and Paris for the South."<sup>\*</sup> The same author refers to the French Revolution as the daughter of the great Johannite Orient, and the ashes of the Templars.<sup>†</sup>

Among the accusations against the Templars was that they worshiped a strange and secret god. Deodat Jafet, one of the knights, speaking "of his own free will" after many hours of being broken on the rack, confessed anything that the inquisitors required. Under the gentle inspiration of thumbscrews and an iron boot crushing his heel bones, he described an image supposedly venerated by the Templars: "I was alone in a chamber with the person who received me: he drew out of a box a head, or idol, which appeared to me to have three faces, and said *thou shouldest adore it as thy Saviour and that of the order of the Temple.*" Later, Jafet retracted his entire confession, and stood to the last as one of the defenders of the Order.

It is possible that this three-faced image was a Brahman Trimurti, which had come into the possession of the Templars during their years in the Near East, or it may have existed only in the prepared confessions which the knights were so pleasantly induced to sign. In either event, this idol came to be identified with the secret activities of the Societies which perpetuated the Mysteries of the Temple.

It should be mentioned that the knights were also accused of adoring a curious deity in the form of a monstrous head or a demon in the form of a goat. This idol, named Baphomet, the goat of Mendes, has been called the secret god of the Templars. According to Levi, Baphomet should

<sup>\*</sup>See *History of Magic*.

<sup>†</sup>See *Transcendental Magic*.



be spelled cabalistically backwards, and consists of three abbreviations: TEM. OHP. AB., *Templi omnium hominum pacis abbas* (the father of the temple of universal peace among men).



TITLE PAGE OF ANDREAEE'S MYTHOLOGIAE CHRISTIANAE  
(Strasbourg, 1619)

This figure includes one of the earliest representations of the compass and square, and at the base is the three-faced deity of the Knights Templars.

Although it is a popular belief that the Knights Templars were for the most part unlearned and incapable of being addicted to an esoteric tradition requiring advanced scholarship, such an opinion is not supported by any direct proof. The average historian does not believe in the reality of a

secret doctrine, therefore, he has no inclination to search for one. He is satisfied to assume that the cupidity of the Church and State accounts sufficiently for the extraordinary fanaticism which crushed the Templars.

In this work we are attempting to show that the Order of the Temple descended from the Secret Schools, and was a direct source of later esoteric Fraternities. We know, for example, that the German theologian, Johann Valentin Andreae, was a moving spirit in the universal reformation of mankind attempted in the opening years of the 17th century. We reproduce herewith the title page of Andreae's *Mythologiae Christianae*, published in 1619. The engraving is a mass of Masonic symbols, and includes one of the earliest representations of the combining of the compass and square now familiar to all Freemasons. At the bottom of this plate is the three-faced idol of the Templars represented exactly as it was originally described, partly bearded, and placed on a small base. We advance the speculation that this is a legitimate landmark connecting two important cycles of esoteric Brotherhoods. The other symbols decorating this remarkable engraving merely support those already mentioned. Worthy of note is the little figure in the circle on the left side of the design above the word *Grammatica*. Here a hand passes a human tongue to another hand, a graphic representation of the transference of a doctrine or "word." As we become sensitive to the pattern underlying the descent of mystical Fraternities, symbols originally obscure or unnoticed take on an obvious vitality.

### *Charlemagne and the Legend of Roland*

Charles the Great (Charlemagne), King of the Franks and Holy Roman Emperor, was born in A. D. 742, and is remembered by popular historians for the brilliance of his reign, the success of his arms, the number of his wives, and

his diet of spitted venison. A considerable part of his life was devoted to the extension and protection of his domains and the quelling of rebellions among his subjects, but he found time in the interludes between his military campaigns to be the moving spirit in an important revival of arts and



CHARLEMAGNE

From an early illumination, preserved in the monastery of St. Calisto in Rome.

letters. He not only encouraged scholarship but practiced it moderately himself, and is believed to have obtained some proficiency in Latin grammar, rhetoric, dialectics, and astronomy. Such intellectual accomplishments were unusual to royalty of the 8th century and resulted in a mini-



num of grammatical errors in his edicts and legislations. It is probable that he could read and write, but he depended largely upon professional clerks for his extensive knowledge of history and religion. Like Akbar, the great Mogul who attained the distinction of being the world's most highly educated illiterate, Charlemagne found it more economical to hire readers than to burden his mind and time with too much schooling.

Although Charlemagne was crowned Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire by Pope Leo III, and was presented with the keys to the grave of St. Peter, he never was actually the sovereign of the Romans. His real position was that of protector and defender of the Popes. He encouraged a revision of the text of the Latin *Vulgate*, and left a considerable library of old manuscripts and records. He lived beyond his seventieth year and is said to have died of pleurisy. The historical Charlemagne became the central figure in an important cycle of myths and legends of profound interest to students of the esoteric tradition.

The Orders of Chivalry were dedicated to the restoration of the primitive Christian Church as it existed in the time of the apostles. In order to accomplish this restoration, it was necessary to rediscover the high secrets of the Christian Mysteries. The esoteric Association of the San Grael, the Knighthood of the Round Table, the Knights Templars, the Knights Hospitalers of St. John of Jerusalem, and the Teutonic Knights have been called "the military apostles of the religion of love." Heckethorn describes them as "military troubadours, who, under the standards of justice and right, fought against the monstrous abuses of the Theocratic regime, consoled the 'widow'—perhaps the Gnostic Church—protected the 'sons of the widow'—the followers of Manes—and overthrew giants and dragons, inquisitors and churchmen. The powerful voice of the furious Roland,

which made breaches in the granite rocks of the mountains, is the voice of that so-called heresy which found its way into Spain, thus anticipating the saying of Louis XIV, 'there are no longer any Pyrenees.' ”\*

In A. D. 778 Charlemagne invaded Spain, captured Pamplona, and laid siege to Saragossa. In the midst of his campaign, news reached the king of a revolt among his Saxon subjects, and he was forced to abandon the Spanish war and hasten back to the Rhine. Incidentally, perhaps the change in plans was not entirely unwelcome, for the siege of Saragossa was going badly. While withdrawing the main body of his army through the wild gorges and hazardous defiles of the Pyrenees, his rear guard was cut off and completely annihilated by the Basques. These mountaineers attained this signal victory by starting avalanches in narrow places along the road and hurling boulders down upon the Franks. Among the generals of Charlemagne's army who perished in this action was Hruodland, praefect of the Breton march. On this slight historical foundation was built the hero legend of Roland (Hruodland), one of the great epics of the Age of Chivalry. In its final form the *Chanson de Roland* bears little resemblance to sober fact, but it is an excellent example of the allegories ingeniously devised by the Troubadours for the perpetuation of their Mystery cult.

According to the legend of Roland, this culture hero is represented as the nephew of Charlemagne. He is one of the "twelve peers" forming the supreme council of the Frankish king. These peers, like the Knights of the Round Table, were nobles of exceptional valor and high integrity, all save one, the perfidious Lord Ganelon, whose treachery destroyed the sacred assembly. In the terms of this symbol-

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\*See *Secret Societies of All Ages*.

ism, Charlemagne, the initiated Christian king-emperor represents Christ; his twelve peers are the apostles. Roland is John the Beloved, and Ganelon is Judas. Thus Charlemagne, the wise and righteous monarch, the glorious king and the preserver of the faith, like Solomon and Arthur personify the Sun, and his peers, the twelve signs of the zodiac.

Roland is a Christian Siegfried, a form of the "hero of the world." In the legend of Roland, the Basques vanish entirely, and in their place is the vast army of the Saracens, the hosts of the unbelievers. The scene of the great battle is still the Pyrenees, and here the twelve peers, including Roland, Oliver, and the valiant Archbishop Turpin, the warrior-priest, die together to protect the withdrawal of Charlemagne and the main body of his army.

At the time of the actual battle, Charlemagne was only thirty-six years old, but in the legend he is represented as a venerable man with long white hair and beard. The treason of Ganelon is revealed to the king in a dream, and when from a distance he hears the last blasts of Roland's war trumpets he returns to save his beloved nephew, but arrives too late. In the story he "wreaks a terrible vengeance" upon the Saracens, but this has no foundation in fact. Lord Ganelon is tried for treason, found guilty, and torn to pieces by wild horses.

An interesting reference to the court of Prester John occurs in the legends of Roland. In this account, Roland, afflicted with madness, wandered in the wilderness. At the court of Charlemagne, the peers resolved to seek the stricken hero, and Astolpho, the poet-knight, declared that he would devote himself to the quest. By a happy accident, the winged horse of Atlantes had fallen into the keeping of Astolpho. Mounting the steed of high verse, the poet-knight



flew beyond the regions of Ethiopia, and alighted in the wonderous realm of the mighty Prester John.

According to this legend, Prester John was unhappy because he had been unable to cross the great mountains to the spring of eternal life, where old age was unknown and to which death never came. When Prester John attempted to reach this spring, horrible disasters came upon the expedition, and a voice from heaven spoke: "Think not, vain man, to pry into the secret things of the Most High!" From that time on, the court of Prester John was afflicted by the presence of seven Harpies that screamed and howled in the air and snatched the food from the banquet tables. Astolpho, by the blast of his magic horn, dispersed the Harpies; and in gratitude, Prester John supplied a band of warriors to assist Astolpho in his search for Roland.

Although Charlemagne outwardly sustained the papacy, he was the Grand Master of a mystical and philosophical Fraternity which had descended from the Bards, the Druids, and the Drotts. As an initiate-king he is revealed as a patron of learning and the arts, and the virtual founder of the university system in Europe. He enriched the cloister schools, broadened their scope, and introduced many useful branches of secular instruction. His wars against the Saracens merely signified his victory over the subversive, anti-social forces of ignorance. Wagner, in his mystical music-drama, *Parsifal*, places the magical garden of Klingsor, the sorcerer, in a valley of Moorish Spain. In the original presentation of the opera, Klingsor was costumed as a Near Eastern potentate, and the flower maidens, whom he controlled by his enchantments, were dressed like the houris of *The Arabian Nights' Entertainment*. In recent years the Metropolitan Opera in New York has revived the correct costuming.

The earlier Orders of Chivalry practiced three degrees or grades of initiation. Candidates first became pages, then squires, and finally knights. After the mingling of the old military Fraternities with such mystical sects as the Albigenes and the Ghibellines, the number of degrees was increased. In some groups there were as many as thirty-three grades somewhat similar to the structure of modern Freemasonry. The romances of the Round Table, the Holy Grail, and the Circle of Charlemagne certainly originated in the esoteric teachings of the Nordic, Gothic, and Celtic rites. Such legends as those of Parsifal, King of the Grail, and the Swan-knight Lohengrin, his son, are veiled reports of the Secret Schools of the adepts.

Wagner's interpretation of the Grail Cycle, though based upon early traditions, was largely colored by his own mystical convictions. As he glorified the Orders of Chivalry in his Grail operas, so he dignified the guilds, which had the same origin, in his *Meistersinger of Nuremberg*. The knight-initiates of the Brotherhoods of the Quest performed vigils, cultivated visions, and lived by rules and regulations as rigid as any monastic Order. They had signs and passwords and were bound together by secret vows and obligations. They were dedicated to the protection of the weak, the preservation of righteous peace, and the perpetuation of certain spiritual and philosophical secrets.

When the Inquisition accused the Knights Templars of worshipping demons and practicing obscene and abominable rites, these accusations merely referred to the pagan doctrines held in secret by this Order of Chivalry. After the destruction of the Templars, the esoteric tradition of Europe disappeared from public view to be restated cautiously in the curious terminology of the alchemists, the cabalists, the Rosicrucians, and even the astrologers. The Orders of the

Quest gave place to the Orders of the Great Work. The elixir of life in the alchemical bottle is identical in meaning with the blood of Christ in the Holy Chalice. Even the dragons and monsters of the hero myths survived in the hieroglyphical drawings of the alchemistical philosophers.

Charlemagne with his twelve peers is Odin, the Grand Master of the Drotts, seated in council with the twelve Ases in the high and secret palace of Asgard. The brave Lord Roland is Tammuz, Dionysus, Sigurd, Balder, Sir Galahad, and Robin Hood. All these gallant champions of the human cause, these defenders of the weak, these princes of the Philosophic Empire, these soldiers of spiritual democracy personify the initiates of the Mystery Schools. The adept is the eternal "hero of the world."

### *The Troubadours*

The Manichaeans, the neo-Manichaeans, and the post-Manichaeans went far afield to find grist for their mill. There was an old Druidic footing under the culture of the Gauls. One of the three branches of the Druid Order was known as the Bards. They were the wandering poets and minstrels, the singers of the Mysteries, concealing profound spiritual truths under gay songs, stories, fables, and myths. The Bards were a closely organized group. They had signs, words, and secret means of knowing each other. They had a sign of distress, which compelled others of their Order to come to their assistance in time of trouble. These wandering singers and storytellers played an important part in the social and ethical life of early Europe. They carried news from place to place, and, needless to say, the reports which filtered through the Bards took on a coloring appropriate to the problem of the moment. In this way, these poet-singers exercised a powerful religious, philosophical, and political influence.



The machinery of the Druidic Mysteries was revived by the descendants of the sons of Manes, to become the mechanism behind the Troubadours. Actually there was no break between the ancient Mysteries and the post-reformation revival of arts and sciences, which made possible the modern way of life. "Virgil," says W. F. C. Wigston, "takes up the lighted torch of Homer and hands it on to Dante, who passes it to the genius behind the Shakespeare mask."

The Troubadours were armed with one of the most important of all psychological formulas: If one would change the world, teach the young. They appointed themselves the tutors of chivalry, and were regarded as peculiarly equipped to endow youth with an appropriate cultural viewpoint. On the surface, their advice was simple, honest, and effective, and obviously above reproach. They taught, for example, that a genteel man always mended an open seam in his garment; this is more important than to patch a hole. A hole may indicate long wear, but an open seam represents carelessness. Incidentally, these reformers were careful to prevent any open "seams" in their own association. Another precious bit of advice was, in effect: It is not important that the rich dress well, but most important that the poor dress neatly; small means plus neatness equal character.

It may be inferred by the political consequences of their activities that the Troubadours did not limit themselves to a consideration of what the well-dressed young man should wear. Beneath the surface was the doctrine of the rights of man. The Order taught chivalry toward the weak, and emphasized that service for the common good was Nature's highest calling. From the Troubadours came many of those glorious myths and legends of the Age of Chivalry, the moral fables that right always conquers, and

nobility of spirit is the only true nobility to which man can attain. A goodly number of our children's fairy tales were first sung by the Troubadours. Sometimes the original story is much older, but these minstrels found a way to adapt the legends to their own purposes.

The Troubadours flourished in Southern France, Italy, and Northern Spain between the 11th and 14th centuries. It is now established with certainty that these men, who numbered about four hundred, were members of a secret mystical or philosophical Fraternity, dedicated to the discovery of those powers of the mind and heart which must be cultivated and disseminated before it is possible to bring about a universal reformation of mankind.

In his most stimulating article, *Alchemy and the Holy Grail*, Harold Bayley writes: "Everyone has heard of the Troubadours, but it is not generally realized that they were heretics under the ban of the Church and driven hither and thither by that relentless antagonist. Their mission, Aroux tells us, was to redress the wrongs of Rome, to take up the defense of the weak and oppressed. They were also represented and celebrated as the true soldiers of the Christ, the exponents of celestial chivalry, and the champions of the poor, attacking under all their forms the monstrous abuses of the Priesthood. It is said that great numbers of the higher classes became Troubadours, wandering from Court to Court and castle to castle, spreading the doctrine of the organization for which they were acting as emissaries."\*

In France the Troubadours were protected by the Albigenses, for the obvious reason that both groups held the same convictions and descended from the same source. The great rituals of the Troubadours were called the Courts

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\*See *Baconiana* (1907).





—From the *Melopoiae of Tritonius* (Augsburg, 1507)

#### APOLLO ON PARNASSUS

This curious woodcut, sometimes attributed to Durer, represents the deity surrounded by the Muses and other mythological characters. The symbolism includes all the emblems which occur a century later in connection with the Rosicrucians and the Society of the Unknown Philosophers.



of Love. Here under the guise of a most elementary and material passion they preached the gospel of the divine love of God for man, and the human love which alone could bring the Brotherhood of humanity. The Troubadours dedicated impassioned ballads to the fair lady of their hearts. Only the initiates, however, knew that this lady was the Isis of Sais, the Sophia of the Gnosis, and the Diana of the Ephesians.

The body of the learned, which formed the secret council of the Order, was the custodian of an esoteric tradition that had descended from the Druidic, Egyptian, and Chaldean sages. These minstrels concealed their knowledge from the profane, not because they desired a superiority for themselves, but for the sake of self-preservation. The name *troubadour* means a "seeker after something that is hidden," and a minstrel is a minister or religious teacher. But if the Troubadours worked quietly and industriously to further their doctrines, the adversaries were no less cunning. The Church and State, aware that open rebellion threatened if the Troubadours were successful in setting up their great Court of Love (world democracy), quietly but relentlessly tore down each structure raised by the singing sages. To preserve the social *status in quo* the Inquisition was set up, and one by one the initiates of Manes were trapped on some pretext. The real reason for their destruction was their political plotting against ecclesiastical and temporal autocracy. Once again the "sons of the widow" perished at the stake or gibbet, or were broken on the rack.

It is said that Dante was a Troubadour, and when we examine the structure of the *Divine Comedy* the conviction grows. St. Francis of Assisi is believed to have received his first inspiration to mystical devotion from the Courts of Love. Among other important names associated with the Order are Richard the Lionhearted and the poet Petrarch.

The veiled lady of the Shakespearean sonnets and Dante's Beatrice were not mortal women, but the Virgin of the World, the secret Mother of the Mysteries. We may suspect that Giordano Bruno, a martyr in the name of progress, knew something of these Mysteries when he wrote in a letter: "I am displeased with the bulk of mankind . . . and am enamoured with one particular lady. 'Tis for her that I am free in servitude, content in pain, rich in necessity, and alive in death. . . . 'Tis for the love of true Wisdom and by the studious admiration of this Mistress that I fatigue, that I disquiet, that I torment myself." Even the uninitiated can scarcely miss the implication.

The names of the principal Troubadours, from Guilhem IX, Count of Poitiers, to Guiraut Riquier, can be traced in any standard text on the subject. From the membership we gain a reasonable comprehension of the stations and abilities of these initiate-poets and singers. We can also trace the survival of the Order in the Minnesingers, later Meistersingers, of the Rhine. The principles of the Minnesang reached Germany from Provence, one of the last strongholds of the Troubadours. The Minnesingers also addressed their songs to a lady whose name must not be spoken, but in whose service the gallant knight must pine away in desperate poetic devotion. One of the greatest of the Minnesingers, Rinemar of Alsace, was called "the scholastic philosopher of unhappy love." Names change, but the substance of the tradition is ever the same.

The name Pleiad, from Pleiades, was first bestowed in Alexandria, that Egyptian city of initiates, scholars, and libraries, upon seven tragic poets who flourished in the 3rd century B. C. Later in French literature there is reference to the Pleiad of Charlemagne, King of the Franks, also an initiate. In the last quarter of the 16th century, the French Pleiade, a group of seven poets, of whom Pierre de Ronsard

was the most celebrated, attempted the renovation and enlargement of language as a means of literature and art. Lord Bacon is believed to have been in contact with the French Pleiade, and has been referred to as the eighth star in the "constellation of the poets."

Let us not deceive ourselves with the delusion that these servants of the Muses gathered by accident or appeared upon the intellectual horizon merely to glisten for a night. The Pleiade inherited the unfinished labors of the Troubadours, as these in turn were rooted in the confederation of the Orphic poets.

### *Taliesin, the Initiate*

In the days of the good King Arthur, Elphin, the son of Gwyddno, had been granted a weir, which is a fence of stakes set in a waterway to take fish. Elphin was slow of mind, and it seemed that his wit was so dull that his father could think of no other way in which the young man could make a living except by profiting from the salmon catch. When Elphin went the next day to inspect his new weir, he found a leathern bag hanging from one of the posts. Upon opening the bag, Elphin discovered within it a living infant of wondrous beauty who had been cast up by the waters. He named the baby Taliesin, in reference to his radiant brow.

Elphin did not know that the mother of Taliesin was Ceridwen, the goddess of the magic caldron, nor did he realize that the beautiful child had no other father but itself, for it was born through sorcery and enchantment. Ceridwen was resolved to slay her own son, but when he was born, she repented of her evil intent and placed him in a stream where some stranger would find him. Much of this story is reminiscent of the legend of Moses and his ark of bulrushes.



While Taliesin was still a small boy he was brought to the palace of the king, where he could listen to the court Bards and minstrels. He had already gained considerable reputation as a poet and singer, but he sat quietly in a corner. As the entertainers prepared to perform, however, he cast a spell upon them so that they could only bow before the king and make meaningless sounds. When the Bards accused the child of causing the sorcery, the great king bade him come forward and explain himself and his actions. The song of Taliesin on this occasion is one of the most remarkable poems in the philosophical literature of the world. Thus sang the Bard:

“Primary chief bard am I to Elphin,  
And my original country is the region of the summer stars;  
Idno and Heinin called me Merddin,  
At length every being will call me Taliesin.

“I was with my Lord in the highest sphere,  
On the fall of Lucifer into the depths of hell;  
I have borne a banner before Alexander;  
I know the name of the stars from north to south.

“I was in Canaan when Absalon was slain,  
I was in the court of Don before the birth of Gwydion.  
I was in the place of the crucifixion of the merciful Son  
of God;  
I have been three periods in the prison of Arianrod.

“I have been in Asia with Noah in the ark,  
I have seen the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.  
I have been in India when Roma was built.  
I am now come here to the remnant of Troia.

"I have been with my Lord in the ass's manger,  
I have strengthened Moses through the waters of Jordan;  
I have been in the firmament with Mary Magdalene;  
I have obtained the Muse from the cauldron of Ceridwen.

"I shall be until the day of doom on the face of the earth;  
And it is not known whether my body is flesh or fish."\*

Taliesin exists only as a name in the old history and literature of the Welsh. Many early songs and poems are attributed to him, but of the man himself nothing is known. It was not until the 16th century of the present era that even a mythical account of his life was compiled or invented. Of course it is possible that early and little-known legends were drawn upon, but it is equally possible that a story was manufactured to explain the writings attributed to this elusive Bard. In any case, Taliesin personifies the perfect initiate of the later Druidic Mysteries. We use the word *later* because in most of his poems a strong Christian influence is present. He was the Christian Druid, accepting the new faith, but rejecting nothing of the old.

The pagan philosophers of Britain and Gaul found many parallels between their own doctrine and those imported by the Catholic priests. It was quite evident to the wise men of the oak trees that Jesus was a Druid. His life and teachings agreed exactly with the reports about their own initiates, and the first Christian missionaries were not entirely loath to capitalize upon these real or apparent similarities. As a result, it is hard to say whether the Druidic Order became a pagan school of Christian Mysteries or a Christian school of pagan Mysteries.

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\*From the abridgment by T. W. Rolleston in his *Myths and Legends of the Celtic Race*.

The Druids believed in metempsychosis, and Taliesin sang of his previous lives upon the earth in the same verses in which he paid homage to Christ. The Bards were so certain that they would be born again in the physical world that they lent money to be paid back in a future incarnation. Several such agreements are preserved in the British Museum. Pagan gods and Christian saints were honored together without the slightest hint of conflict, and such legends as those of the Holy Grail and Arthur's Round Table reveal the two systems in an indissoluble compound.

Perhaps the Druid initiates knew more about esoteric Christianity than regular churchgoers of today would like to admit. These ancient philosophers were not overly impressed by appearances, and they accepted it as a matter of course that a great religion was by necessity a science of human regeneration concealed under mystical symbols. They applied their own Golden Key to the keyhole of the Christian fables, and were not at all surprised to find that it fitted perfectly. It is doubtful if the missionaries of the Church were as generous, and it is equally doubtful if they ever even knew what was happening. They were too busy making converts to investigate the minds and hearts of those they were converting.

It is impossible to bind those who have unfolded their own internal spiritual faculties to arbitrary limitations imposed by any formal religious system. In all faiths, those truly wise perceive universal truths, and the more philosophical a system of belief, the more useful it is in interpreting other systems that are founded upon similar principles. In his introduction to *Barddas*, Rev. J. Williams Ab Ithel quotes the following: "And when we consider that the Gorsedd of the Bards was but a continuation, in the White Island, of the circular temples of patriarchal times, we may feel assured that it is among the ruins of



Bardism, or the religious system connected with the primitive temples, we may hope to discover, if at all, that Golden Key concealed and secured, which can open the mysteries, or esoteric doctrine, of ancient nations."

Taliesin was the Welsh Orpheus, for, like the Bard of Thrace, he charmed the whole world with his songs. He even descended into the underworld, and the dark land was filled with his music. Like Tuan mac Carell, the old Irish initiate of County Donegal, Taliesin remembered the many transformations (incarnations) through which he had passed, and he sang of the beginnings of life and the growths of men and the histories of his people, because he had the memory of the long-living in his own heart. According to the legends he did not die, but was again transformed. He grew old, and then "he became young again;" and when feebleness came upon him, he journeyed to the secret place to await the renewal of his body.

### *Merlin the Magician*

Who was the mysterious Merlin, held prisoner in a house of air or mist, to finally vanish into the earth attended by nine Bards, and taking with him "The Thirteen Treasures of Britain?" It is quite in line with modern policy that recent scholars, after reviewing the legends and fables which surround this magician, should solemnly conclude that he is entirely mythological. It never seems to occur to this learned gentry that myths may have secret meanings, and should be examined in the light of the religions and philosophies in which they originate.

According to the most common account, Merlin was born of an Immaculate Conception during the reign of Vortigern, King of Britain, who ruled in the 5th century A. D. In a strange book entitled *Merlin, Surnamed Ambrosius*, pub-

lished anonymously in London, in 1813,\* it is reported "that he was conceived by the compression of a fantastical creature, without a body." His mother was a royal virgin,



MERLIN THE MAGICIAN

In this figure, Merlin is represented in the garb of a monk to emphasize his Christian baptism. In his lap is a book, on the open pages of which are the words: "The Red Dragon."

daughter of King Demetius. A similar account appears in that most curious work *Comte de Gabalis*, which was first printed in 1684. Here it is stated that the father of Merlin was an elemental spirit of the order of sylphs, and his

\*Reprint of the edition of 1641, by Thomas Heywood.

mother a Christian nun. The place of Merlin's birth is not known, but it is generally supposed to have been in England or Wales. Charles W. Heckethorn, however, says he was born on the Island of Sena in Gaul, this being one of the last strongholds of the Druidic Mysteries.

Merlin was baptized hastily in order to preserve him against the occult circumstances of his own birth, but throughout life he combined in his person the humanity of his mother and the unearthly quality of his submundane

94. *Vter Pendragon* raigned  
18 yeeres. 498.



**T**HIS King (by *Merlins* meanes, a skilfull man)  
*Igrene*, the Duke of *Cornewals* Dutcheffe wan:  
On her he got, (though illegittimate)  
The Christian Worthy, *Arthur*, stilde the Great.

*Vter Pendragon* poisoned by the Saxons, after  
he had reigned 18. yeeres.

—From *A Memorial of Monarchs*

#### UTHER PENDRAGON

father. While still a small boy, Merlin was brought to the court of Vortigern, where he confounded the priestly astrol-ogers and made several extraordinary predictions that later proved to be entirely accurate.

During the reign of Aurelius Ambrose, who succeeded Vortigern, Merlin is said to have brought the mighty stones of Stonehenge from Ireland to the plains of Salisbury in a single night. This monument had originally been set up



in Africa, and had been conveyed to Ireland by unknown means at a remote time. Merlin delivered the stones in Wiltshire by a whirlwind, and placed them as they now stand over the graves of British lords slain through treachery. Certainly this report cannot be taken literally, but if we understand by the circle of ancient stones the symbol of a Lodge of Druid initiates, the legend immediately has meaning. The Romans did not invade Ireland, and the pagan Mysteries were practiced there long after they had been destroyed in Britain.

Merlin also served the next king, Uther Pendragon, whose name means the head of the dragon. He served Uther as counselor and magician through the seven years of his reign, and by his enchantment made possible the birth of the hero-king, Arthur, the Boar of Cornwall. Arthur was the son of Uther Pendragon and Igera, Duchess of Cornwall. Much is made of the fact that the earliest historical records of King Arthur contain none of the mystical elements with which we are now familiar. There is no mention of the Holy Grail, the Round Table, or the magic sword Caliburn (Excalibur), which was fashioned in the land of the fairies. But the early legends do say that Merlin the Magician was with Arthur at his court at Caerleon-on-Usk, guiding the young king with wise counsel.

Some writers have attempted to solve the historical problems by assuming that both Merlin and Arthur were gods of an old Mystery cult. In this vein Lewis Spence writes: "It is plain that he [Arthur], like Osiris, is the god of a mystical cult who must periodically take a journey through the underworld, not only for the purpose of subduing its evil inhabitants, but of learning their secrets and passwords in order that the souls of the just, the perfected initiates, will be enabled to journey through that plane unharmed. . . . That Arthur and Osiris are indeed figures

originating in a common source must be reasonably clear to the student of the myth. Druidism is only the cult of Osiris in another form, and Arthur seems to have a common origin with Ausar or Osiris.”\*

Unfortunately the facts are somewhat more complicated. The Osiris myth itself is but a fragment out of context, and can never be understood by those who assume that legends wander up and down the world willy-nilly, imposing themselves upon themselves in endless confusion. Certainly the Arthurian Cycle is part of the initiate tradition, but the key to it lies not in distant lands but in some deep hidden place within the structure of human consciousness.

Merlin, like all these mysterious mythological sages, is the secret doctrine itself, born of heaven and earth and locked within a house of glass—the sphere of illusion. He is not some old Cymric demigod under a new name, but a personification of an order of learning. In all probability there was a historical Merlin; perhaps several old Welsh Bards and soothsayers have been combined to form the legend. But the true life story of Merlin the man will never be known for it was never recorded. The Merlin of the myth is the adept, whose identity has been absorbed into the Universal Mystery of human regeneration. The Great School is personified in each of its initiates. This is why the heroes of all nations pass through the same experiences. There is only one experience that can lead to truth, and there is only one description appropriate to those who have accomplished the divine adventure. Of course, all esoteric biographies are perpetuated in symbolic form, for it is impossible to put into simple words those mysteries of the spirit that are not of this world.

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\*See *The Mysteries of Britain*.

There is a secret legend that Merlin's invisible father moved through the ethereal atmosphere in the form of a serpent. The archdruids of Britain and Gaul were the winged serpents, and their most sacred symbol was the serpent's egg, a symbol of both the universe and the Mystery School. The Immaculate Conception was the second birth from this philosophic egg or the womb of the Mysteries. The magician is the Master of illusion and the oracle of Nature. This priestly adept is the ruler over all the rulers of the world by divine right. In the case of Merlin, the adept brought the circle of the living stones to Salisbury, not the monolithic rocks that now strew its plain, but the Gorsedd, the throne of the revelation of the ancient ones of the earth. The Gorsedd of the Druids became the Round Table of King Arthur. There is no break in the mystical descent, for the young king takes the place of the old king—long live the king! At first it seems that the magical caldron of Ceridwen gave place to the Grail, and that the old pagan Mysteries faded away before the light of Christendom. But exactly the reverse was true. The ancient wisdom ensouled the new faith, and the Holy Grail became the caldron of Ceridwen.

Merlin sleeps in his glass tomb like the mysterious Father C. R. C. of the Rosy Cross, who is said to lie quickening in a womb of crystal. The dying King Arthur floats away to Avalon in a ship of glass. Each will return to life in his proper time, for he is not dead but sleeping. The sleeping hero is the adept-self locked within the mortal form of Nature, a form which appears to reveal everything and at the same time conceals everything. We look about us and nothing seems hidden, but so little is understood. We are all prisoners in a crystal sphere. The universe itself is the geometrical vault, the many-sided tomb, in which lies buried the "hero of the world" awaiting the resurrection.



In the Druidic rites of initiation the candidate was placed in a coffin as one dead, and after three degrees (symbolically days), he was restored to life and accepted into the communion of the reborn ones, the initiates. According to Caesar, the Druids would never commit to writing their secret knowledge about the universe and its laws. It was not necessary, for they perpetuated their esoteric doctrines through the songs and poems of their Bards. Whoever can read aright the myth of Merlin will understand the hidden place four-square in the Island of the Strong Door.

### *The Arthurian Cycle*

Walter Map (Mapes), who died about 1209 at an advanced age, was the outstanding English literator and humorist at the court of King Henry II. From the meager records of his life, he seems to have been, at least indirectly, associated with the Troubadours. He is often referred to as an ecclesiastic and certainly held several benefices, but there is no direct record of his ordination. At one time, Map was clerk of the royal household and justice-itinerant. He studied in Paris, attended the Lateran council at Rome, and traveled extensively.

Although it is believed that Map was responsible for linking the legend of King Arthur with the Grail Cycle, cautious researchers are inclined to question the popular account. The justice-itinerant was a busy man, and it is quite possible that such lengthy and involved legends as *Lancelot*, *Mort Artus*, and the *Queste* were the productions of a group rather than an individual. It appears likely, however, that Walter Map was responsible for the transplanting of certain romances of chivalry from the Continent to the British Isles, and mingling them with the streams of English folklore.

The Arthurian Cycle begins with Merlin—Merlin the Wise, Merlin the Wild, Merlin the Bard, Merlin the Mad.

Dr. S. Humphreys Gurteen, in introducing the character of Merlin, writes: "In point of time, he appears upon the stage long before King Arthur, his famous exploits reaching back even to the reign of Vortigern. He also represents the *intellect* of the world as depicted in these poems, while Arthur represents simply its *physical force*. It is to the necromantic skill and wise counsels of Merlin that the King owes his birth, his crown, his order of Round Table knights, and his victories. It is Merlin who as Court prophet and counsellor, predicts the grandest events in the life of his sovereign, and without whose advice no affair of moment is undertaken."\*

When Arthur was born he was wrapped in cloth of gold, and in fulfillment of an oath made by his father, Uther, was taken to the gate of the castle, and given into the keeping of Merlin. Arthur did not appear again in the legend until Uther, on his death-bed, acknowledged his son and recommended him to the barons as their rightful king. When the proper time came, Merlin, by his magic, caused to appear in the Cathedral Church of London, before the high altar, a large stone with an anvil of steel upon it and a sword thrust into the anvil. Beneath in letters of gold was the inscription: "*Who so pulleth out this sword of this stone and anvile, is rightwise king borne of England.*" Only Arthur could draw forth the sword, in this way proving his right to the succession.

We are reminded of Notung, the sword of the Volsungs, which Odin thrust into the oak, and which only Sigmund could draw from the tree. The sword trial represents the release of the will from bondage to the material elements, signified by the anvil and the stone. Parallels in other esoteric traditions indicate that the test of the sword symbolizes initiation.

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\*See *The Arthurian Epic* (New York and London, 1895).

Most interpreters of the Arthurian Cycle assume that it was devised by Bards and *trouweres* merely for the entertainment of high lords and ladies. Even those who acknowledge the possibility that the legends of Charlemagne

95. *Arthur*. 516.



OF the nine Worthies was this Worthy one,  
*Denmarke*, and *Norway*, did obey his Throne:  
 In twelve set Battels he the *Saxons* beat,  
 Great, and to make his Victories more great,  
 The Faithlesse *Sarazens* he overcame,  
 And made them honour high *Iehonah's* Name.  
 The Noble order of the *Table round*,  
 At *Winchester*, his first inuention found.  
 Whilst he beyond Sea fought to win Renowne,  
 His Nephew *Mordred* did vsurpe his Crowne,  
 But he return'd, and *Mordred* did confound,  
 And in the fight great *Arthur* got a wound,  
 That prou'd so mortall, that immortally  
 It made him liue, although it made him dye.  
 Full sixteene yeeres the Diadem he wore,  
 And every day gaind Honour more and more.

*Arthur the great was buried at Glastenbury.*

—From *A Memorial of Monarchs*

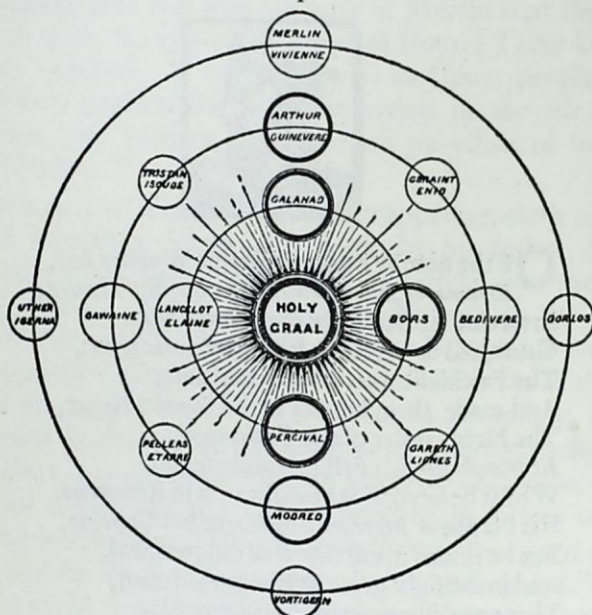
KING ARTHUR

and his twelve paladins may have been transferred to the British clime have not sensed any serious purpose behind the circumstance. It is so easy to be deceived by the



obvious, especially when the historian has no sympathy for the esoteric tradition. Arthur ruled over a court of heroes, much as Odin, the All-father of the Drotts, presided at the councils of the twelve Ases in the great court at Asgard.

King Arthur, like Siegfried, emerges as a type of the culture hero. As Hercules performed twelve labors, so



—From *The Arthurian Epic*

A diagrammatic arrangement of the Arthurian Epic Cyclus, according to the narrative of the Anglo-Norman *trouvères*.

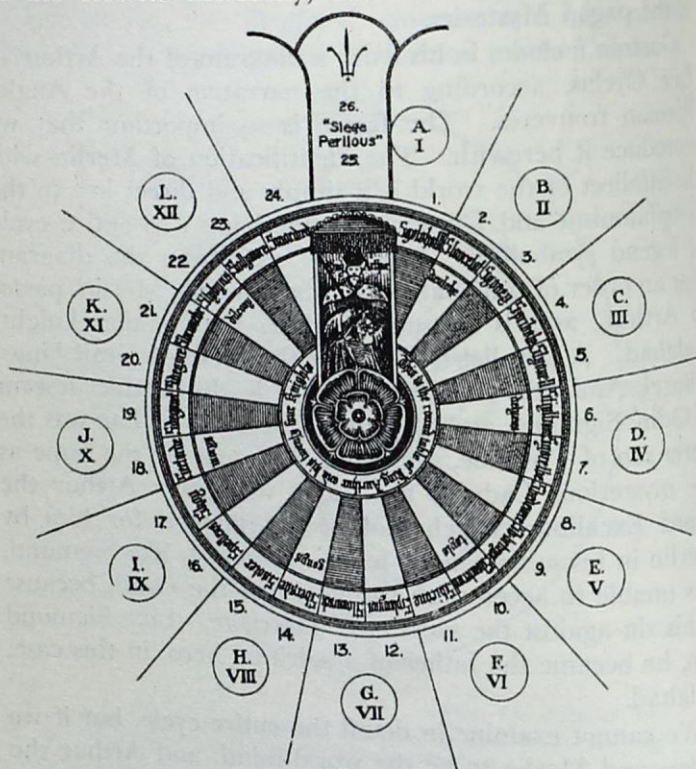
Arthur fought twelve battles in the service of God and Britain. He was betrayed by one of his own trusted knights. As Odin perished with his Ases on the plain of Ragnarok, so Arthur and most of his knights fell at the battle of Camlan. With the hero perished his great Order of the Quest. The *Morte D'Arthur* describes the passing of the king and how his body was borne away to Avalon on a black ship.

Arthur was crowned King of Britain A. D. 516, and he died A. D. 542 in the forty-first year of his life. On the field of Camlan the forces of light and darkness perished together, and the whole story is a thinly veiled account of the fall of the pagan Mysteries.

Gurteen includes in his work a diagram of the Arthurian Epic Cyclus, according to the narrative of the Anglo-Norman *trouveres*. The figure is so important that we reproduce it herewith. The identification of Merlin with the intellect of the world is a simple and direct key to the Neoplatonism and Gnosticism underlying this entire cycle of legend symbolism. It will be seen from the diagram that an order of spiritual descent begins with Merlin, passes to Arthur, and is consummated in the maiden knight, Galahad. A parallel is found in the cycle of Grail kings, Titurel, Amfortis, and Parsifal, and in the Gothic descent of Odin, Sigmund, and Siegfried. Lancelot du Lac was the foster son of Vivienne, a nymph. She may be the same as the mysterious Lady of the Lake, who gave Arthur the sword Excalibur, which had been fashioned for him by Merlin in his subterranean forge. Lancelot, like Sigmund, was unable to accomplish the Quest of the Grail, because of his sin against the sanctity of marriage. Like Sigmund also, he became the father of a spiritual hero, in this case, Galahad.

We cannot examine in detail the entire cycle, but if we understand Merlin to be the world-mind, and Arthur the world-form, then Galahad becomes the world-soul, and the legend unfolds its cosmic content. Arthur himself never attempted the Quest of the Grail, but through his Knighthood of the Round Table, which Merlin had devised and over which the king presided as Grand Master, the accomplishment of the Grail Quest by four holy knights was possible. Thus the Round Table becomes the material

universe itself, ruled by the demiurgus, the Greek Zeus, presiding over the circle of divinities, the twelve great gods of Olympus. Merlin is Kronos, and Galahad is Dionysus. In the esoteric hierarchy, Merlin is the secret doctrine,



—From *The Rosicrucians*, by Hargrave Jennings  
The Round Table of King Arthur, generally referred to as the Winchester table top.

Arthur, the formal structure of the Mystery Schools, and Galahad, the adept, in whose person the mystery of the redemption is revealed.

A table top supposed to be the Round Table of King Arthur is preserved in the courthouse in the castle at Win-



chester, and was reproduced by Hargrave Jennings in *The Rosicrucians, Their Rites and Mysteries*. Like most relics of the Mysteries, this table top is of unknown origin and uncertain descent. Jennings describes his drawing thus: "By tradition, the Round Table of King Arthur devolves from the very earliest period. The illustration . . . was copied from the original with great care and attention. King Arthur, in the principal seat, is idealized in the person of King Henry VIII, in whose time the Round Table is supposed to have been repaired and refaced. In the Revolution, Cromwell's soldiery, after the capture of Winchester, and in the fury at the imputed idea of *idolatry* (the Round Table is the English 'Palladium'), made a target of it. The marks of many balls are still conspicuous."

The center of the Winchester table top is ornamented with a large heraldic rose of the conventional form associated with the house of Tudor. There are places for twenty-four knights arranged in pairs, and a double throne for the Grand Master and the mysterious unknown knight, or adept, who is worthy to sit in the *Siege Perilous*. Like the tomb of Father C. R. C., Arthur's Round Table is a microcosm or mirror of the universe.

The knights met annually at Windsor, Winchester, Camelot, or Caerleon to celebrate the Pentecost. So exalted were these sanctified champions of the code of chivalry that not one could be given a seat above another. For this reason a circular table was constructed and dedicated to the Grail Quest. The table itself had magical powers and could enlarge its own size as the number of the virtuous increased.

The number of persons who could be seated at the table differs in the several accounts. One writer says fifteen hundred, another, one hundred fifty. The Winchester table seated twenty-six, but in the old records, the original table

had space for thirty-two, including the throne of the king and the *Siege Perilous*. Thirty-two chairs plus the Grail throne in the middle would give the highly significant number thirty-three. Here is a possible Masonic intimation of thirty-two degrees earned and one bestowed by the "grace of God."

In one version of the legend, Merlin refers to the Round Table as the original board at which Jesus ate and drank with his disciples on the occasion of the Last Supper. Its mysteries were revived at the court of Uther Pendragon, from which it passed to Leodegrance, King of Cameliard. In the tradition preserved by Geoffrey of Monmouth, Arthur's queen, Guinevere, is described as a Roman lady, but she is usually referred to as a lady of Cornwall and daughter of King Leodegrance.

Arthur received the symbolic table on the occasion of his marriage, possibly as part of Guinevere's dowry. All the elements of the story have been intentionally or accidentally confused, but the implication is that the rites of the Round Table had descended directly from the celebration of the Pentecost by Joseph of Arimathea at Glastonbury.

Sir Modred, the Judas of the Round Table, was born of an illicit union of Arthur and his own half-sister, Morgause, Queen of Orkney. Arthur did not know that Morgause was of his own blood, but he atoned for his sin by dying at the hand of his wretched and evil offspring. Lancelot, who failed to stand beside his king-emperor at the battle of Camlan, finally died of a broken heart on Arthur's grave.

Although the historical Arthur was at best only a British prince, the legends make him conqueror of the world and finally master of the Roman Empire. Symbolically this is necessary, for Arthur personifies the lord of the material

sphere. Materialism is finally destroyed by its own progeny, and of all the circle of the Round Table knights, Galahad alone not only attained the Grail but was translated to heaven without the mystery of death. From the birth of Sir Modred the same note of inevitable tragedy dominated the theme that hung over the Odinic Rites. As the body of the dying Arthur was borne away after the battle of Camlan, it was left for Sir Bedivere to perform the last rituals of the Round Table. He carried the sword Excalibur to the shores of the lake and threw it far out over the water. A hand rose from the deep and, grasping the blade, carried it beneath the waves. The sword is the power of the will, human and divine, which returns to space from whence it came in the day that is called "the twilight of the gods." Lord Tennyson then makes Sir Bedivere cry out:

"But now the whole Round Table is dissolved  
Which was an image of the mighty world."

There are several accounts of the discovery of the grave of King Arthur. The most authentic of these records are those of Giraldus Cambrensis, who was present on the occasion, and William of Malmesbury, who lived at the time. When Henry II visited Wales, he learned from an ancient British Bard that King Arthur had been buried at Glastonbury, and that strange pyramid-monuments marked the grave. The king approached the monks of the abbey and further told them of a report that the remains of Arthur had been deeply interred, not in a stone tomb, but in a hollowed oak tree.

An excavation was made between two pyramids or columns standing in the cemetery of the abbey. Under a stone was found a leaden cross, which Giraldus says he actually held in his hands. The cross was inscribed with



the words: "*Hic jacet sepultus inclytus Rex Arthurus in insula Avallonia*" (Here lies buried the renowned King Arthur in the island of Avallon). Beneath, at the depth of about sixteen feet, a coffin made of a hollowed oak was found and it contained bones of unusual size. Giraldus notes that the leg bone was three fingers longer than that of the tallest man present. The skull also was large and revealed the marks of ten wounds; nine of these had con-  
creted, but the tenth, a large and clean cleft, apparently was the mortal blow. The remains of Guinevere were found on the same occasion, and also those of Modred, Arthur's son and slayer.

The bones were removed to the church at Glastonbury at the order of King Edward I, and were placed before the high altar. This king visited the abbey in 1276 and had the shrine of Arthur opened. After viewing the remains, Edward caused the bones to be folded into a magnificent shroud and had them replaced with deep reverence. According to one historian, the three bodies were buried in the same tomb, one above the other, with King Arthur beneath the other two. According to Thomas Gale,\* Glastonbury was anciently surrounded by marshes and was called the Island of Avalon; that is, the island of apples, from the old British word *aval*. When Arthur was stricken by Modred on the field of Camlan, it is reported that he was carried to the Isle of Avalon to be healed of his wounds by Argante the Fair. Gale, quoting Matthew of Paris, says: "We do not know how he died; but as he is said to have been buried in the Abbey church of Glastonbury with an epitaph in this manner, so we believe him to remain there still, whence the line, '*Hic jacet Arthurus, Rex quondam, Rexque Futurus*' [Here lies Arthur, a King that was,

\*See *Historiae Anglicanae Scriptores*.

and a King to be], for some of the race of the Britons believe that he will live again and restore them from a state of servitude to liberty.”\*

The epitaph supplies the last and most vital element in the compound of the culture hero. The “hero of the world” cannot die. He may retire to his tomb to sleep and to wait, but, like Charlemagne and Barbarossa, he will return to lead his people and re-establish the golden age. He is always identified with a glorious time long-past and a glorious time to come. The culture hero is the personification of the secret hopes and aspirations of the nation which invents him or bestows his qualities upon some historical personage. He is the immortal-mortal. He dies many times for his people, and yet, by enchantment, he forever lives. It will not require a great deal of reflection to discover in the legend of Arthur the conventional form of the adept tradition.

The story is finished. Long before, Merlin the Wise had been captured in the spell of Vivienne and no longer guarded the destiny of the Round Table. Out of the threads and remnants of this splendid mystery was fashioned the Order of the Garter (Guarder). In the Chapel of St. George, the knights of Christendom extended and overlapped their swords to form a brilliant star of gleaming steel. Once they had the Black Book, which told the secrets of the divine right of kings, but one day the book vanished from among them. This Black Book was the sacred writing of Hermes on the conduct of princes, the constitution of a united world. All that remains is the chain of the Garter, with its pendant of St. George the Dragon Slayer, the white and the red roses, and the motto, *Honi soit qui mal y pense* (Evil be to him who evil thinks), on a narrow band of ribbon.

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\*See *The Arthurian Epic*, by S. Humphreys Gurteen (New York and London, 1895).

*Dante Alighieri*

Gabriele Rossetti (1783-1854) was among the victims of the revolutionary changes in Italy. He fled from Naples, and settled in England, where he became Professor of the Italian Language and Literature in King's College, London. He was the father of Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882), English poet and pre-Raphaelite painter. Both father and son were enthusiastic Dantophilists, but it is the elder Rossetti whose contributions have the most direct bearing upon the descent of the esoteric tradition. The vast and varied lore which he brought to bear on the more recondite sense contained in the *Divina Commedia* and in the lyrics of Dante and his contemporaries will remain a memorial of literary labor and loving perseverance.\*

Professor Rossetti was convinced that the poet Dante was a member of a Secret Society, and that his verses concealed a hidden meaning which had escaped the notice of earlier commentators or which they had intentionally ignored. The substance of his researches and the conclusions derived therefrom he published in London, 1832, under the title *Sullo Spirito antipapale che produsse la Riforma, etc.* Professor Rossetti includes Petrarch and Boccaccio among the number of the initiated Italians, but does not devote so much attention to their writings.

The researches of the elder Rossetti are of special interest when we realize that they were in print long before the concept of the descent of a secret doctrine through European schools of adepts had any prominent exponents or apologists. He therefore anticipated, by some fifty years, the convictions of the Theosophical Society and the schools of philosophical mysticism which emerged in the last quarter of the 19th century.

\*See *Lon. Athen.* (1862, i.253).



It will be well to summarize the Rossetti hypothesis, even though his observations overlap, to some degree, material we have already advanced. To facilitate our ends, we shall also have recourse to *Remarks on the Disquisizion* (London, 1832), by Arthur Henry Hallam. A Secret Society, according to Rossetti, whose original is lost in the mysterious twilight of Oriental religion, has continued from the earliest historical point at which its workings can be traced to exercise an almost universal influence on the condition of the civilized world. These Mysteries, which in Egypt, in Persia, and even in Greece and Italy, preserved the speculations of the wise from the ears and tongues of an illiterate multitude, passed, with slight but necessary modifications, into the possession of the early Christian heretics. The Gnostic schools of Syria and Egypt transmitted to their successors, the Manichaeans, a scheme of discipline, which they perpetuated with extreme caution and in the most veiled language, as secrecy became more and more necessary because of the increased centralization of power in the orthodox prelates in Rome.

The Paulicians, whose opinions were for the most part Manichaean, preceded the more illustrious and more unfortunate Albigenses in a secret warfare against spiritual as well as temporal tyranny. The celebrated Order of Templars, so widely diffused throughout Europe, so considerable by the rank and influence of its members, did not differ from the Albigenses in the secret object of their endeavors or the more important part of their mysterious rites.

The rise of a new literature in the 11th and 12th centuries, explains Rossetti, afforded them a new weapon far more terrible than any they had hitherto employed, and capable of being directed to a thousand purposes of attack and

defense. . . . No path of literature has been untrodden by these masked assailants. . . . In poetry, in romance, in history, in science; everywhere we find traces of their presence. Their influence, in some sphere or other, has been exerted on all nations. . . . The love poems and Love Courts of Provence and Toulouse were vehicles of political discussions, of active conspiracy, and of heretical opinion.

The poet Dante was an initiate of this secret, political, social, philosophical, and religious Society; a champion of its means and ends. The proof is concealed in his *Vita Nuova*, the *Divina Commedia* and its commentaries, in the *Convito*, the *De Vulgari Eloquentia*, and others of his minor works. Petrarch and Boccaccio were agents of the same mysterious institution, and its rites and secrets can also be discovered by those having the proper key to the confused writings of Baron Emanuel Swedenborg.

Needless to say, the *Sullo Spirito*, etc. created a minor tempest in the intellectual world. Arthur Hallam, speaking for all the skeptics, pronounces the ideas which it contains "interesting, ingenious, and impossible." Let us bear in mind, however, that Professor Rossetti, himself a political exile, was nourished from childhood upon the pabulum of Italian socialistic idealism and secret assemblages. Both Petrarch and Dante admired Arnaldo Daniello, one of the most obscure of the Provencal poets. They called him the "great Master of Love," but no one understood his songs, although it is known that he was a Troubadour. It is impossible to examine *Le Roman de la Rose* without realizing that it refers to an esoteric Fraternity. The mystical import of the rose symbol of the minstrels is certainly reflected in the rose of Dante—the Rose Eternal "that spreads and multiplies" in the Seventh Heaven, where the blessed Beatrice is enthroned.

Mme. Blavatsky contributes some pertinent observations: "To genius alone it was permitted in those centuries of mental blindness, when the fear of the 'Holy Office' threw a thick veil over every cosmic and psychic truth, to reveal unimpeded some of the grandest truths of Initiations. Whence did Ariosto, in his *Orlando Furioso*, obtain his con-



—From *La Divina Commedia* (Firenze, 1892)

DANTE ALIGHIERI

ception of the valley of the Moon, where after our death we can find the ideas and images of all that exists on earth? How came Dante to imagine the many descriptions given in his *Inferno*—a new Johannine Apocalypse, a true Occult Revelation in verse—his visit and communion with the



Souls of the Seven Spheres? In poetry and satire every Occult truth has been welcomed—none has been recognized as serious.”\*

Dante Alighieri (1265-1321) was born in Florence of a respectable but not especially illustrious family. Little is known of his early life except that he met the little girl whom he called Beatrice when he was about ten years old, and she was in her ninth year. It has seemed reasonable to assume from Dante's poetic works and his letters that his infatuation for Beatrice (Bice Portinari) was the dominant personal emotion in his life. She selected Simone de Bardi for a husband, however, and died before reaching middle age. In 1292 Dante married, and the union was blessed with two sons and one or two daughters. Although Dante involved many of his acquaintances and enemies, at least indirectly, in his poems, no line or passage has been found which seems to allude to his wife. Beatrice remains to the end the mistress of his heart and soul.

For his involvements in the political conspiracies of the day, Dante was exiled from his beloved Florence, and spent the closing years of his life at Ravenna. He died of a fever, consoled by the mystical philosophy which had come to dominate his entire mind. Although Dante's fame is derived principally from his *Divina Commedia*, for our purposes the *Vita Nuova* links him most closely to the mystical speculations of the Troubadours.

The *Vita Nuova* explains how the poet, meeting Beatrice while still a child, concealed his true love [mystical adoration] by inventing a false love [human affection]. Later, after Beatrice had died, she appeared to him in a vision, persuading him to devote his life to study and reflection, thus proving his eternal devotion.

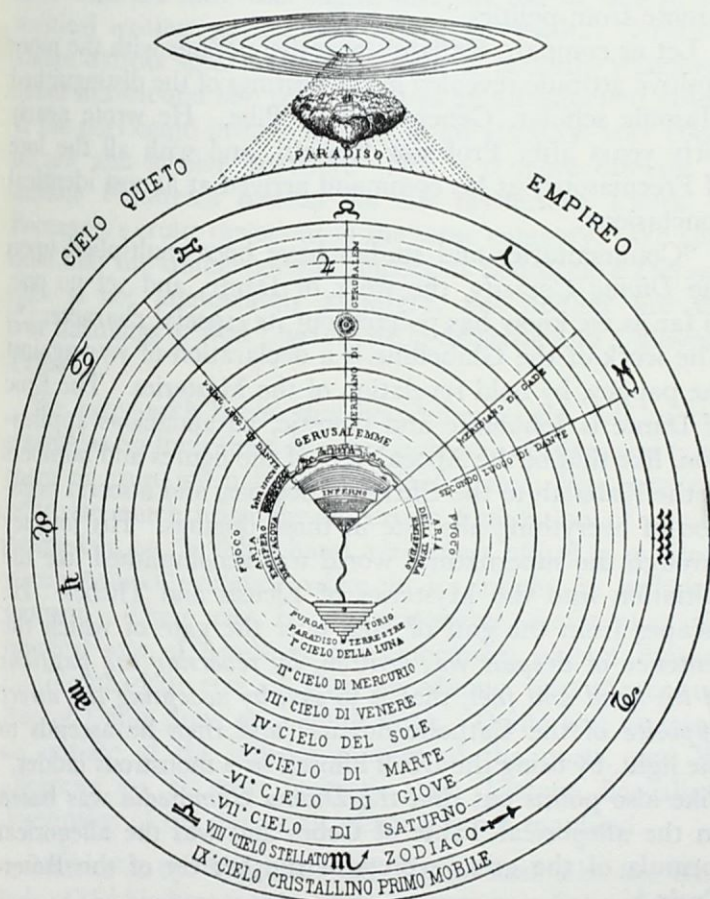
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\*See *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. 3.

"We should certainly feel grateful," wrote Hallam, "for any theory that should satisfactorily explain the *Vita Nuova*. No one can have read that singular work, without having

# PARADISO

O FIGURA UNIVERSALE DELLA DIVINA COMMEDIA



—From *La Divina Commedia* (Firenze, 1892)

THE COSMOGONY OF DANTE'S *DIVINE COMEDY*

found its progress perpetually checked, and his pleasure impaired, by the occurrence of passages apparently unintelligible, or presenting only an unimportant meaning, in phrases the most laborious and involved. . . . Certainly, until Signor Rossetti suggested the idea, we never dreamed of looking for Ghibelline enigmas in a narrative apparently so remote from politics."

Let us compare Hallam's negative notions with the more positive attitude revealed in the writings of the distinguished Masonic scholar, General Albert Pike. He wrote nearly forty years after Professor Rossetti, and with all the lore of Freemasonry at his command arrived at almost identical conclusions:

"Commentaries and studies have been multiplied upon the *Divine Comedy*, the work of Dante, and yet no one, so far as we know has pointed out its especial character. [\*] The work of the Ghibelline is a declaration of war against the papacy, by bold revelation of the Mysteries. The Epic of Dante is Johannite and Gnostic, an audacious application, like that of the Apocalypse, of the figures and numbers of the Kabalah to the Christian dogmas, and a secret negation of everything absolute in those dogmas. His journey through the supernatural world was accomplished like the initiation into the Mysteries of Eleusis and Thebes. He escapes from the gulf of Hell over the gate of which the sentence of despair was written, *by reversing the positions of his head and feet*, that is to say, *by accepting the direct opposite* of the Catholic dogma; and then he ascends to the light, by using the Devil himself as a monstrous ladder." Pike also points out that the *Divina Commedia* was based on the allegorical Table of Cebes and was the allegorical formula of the great secrets of the Society of the Roses-Croix.†

\*Pike evidently was unaware of Rossetti's work.

†See *Morals and Dogmas*.

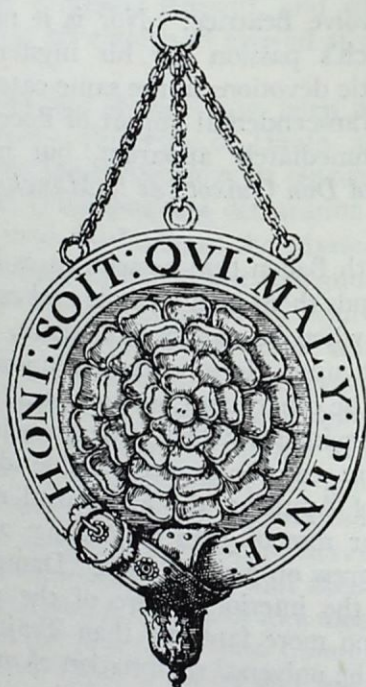


The primary difficulty that confronts the interpreters of Dante is the confusion caused by a historical and symbolical Beatrice. Unimaginative commentators cannot appreciate the entirely reasonable process of using an actual person to personify a spiritual truth. Yet Dante's personal acquaintance with the lady was slight, and his use of her in his mystical writings occurs only after her death. Certainly Dante did not intend to imply that he actually wandered about heaven and hell with Virgil as an all-sufficient guide. If the poet could involve himself in an allegory, why could he not also involve Beatrice? Nor is it more difficult to include Petrarch's passion for his mysterious Laura or Boccaccio's erotic devotions in the same category. We concede that the transcendental import of Boccaccio's *Decameron* is not immediately apparent, but neither are the true meanings of *Don Quixote de la Mancha* and *Gulliver's Travels*.

We agree with Bacon that he who cares for nothing but resemblances finds them in every hole and corner, and takes them on trust when he cannot find them. We must not build too much upon the uncertain foundation of coincidence, but, on the other hand, we cannot afford to overlook circumstantial evidence when it is present in sufficient amount. There can be no reasonable doubt that the mystical rose of Apuleius, the alchemical rose of Flamel, the Troubadour rose of Jean de Meung, and the cosmic rose of Dante grew on a single stem. Dante was certainly an initiate of the interior empire of the poets, and his allegories are no more fantastic than Trajano Boccalini's description of the universal reformation of mankind.

Beatrice is the Virgin of the World, and, like the dark lady of the Shakespearean sonnets, represents Eternal Truth for which all men pine away in hopeless adoration. Yet,

inspired by this unattainable perfection, each embarks upon a knight-errantry of noble purpose. The fair maiden in distress, who must be rescued from giants, ogres, dragons, and tyrants, is humanity itself—the soul collective—victim of the conspiracies of Church and State. This is the simple part of the story. The program for the accomplishment of sacred and civil liberty was in the keeping of those initiates who had bound themselves with a secret and soul-consuming passion to the service of the veiled Virgin of the Mysteries.



—From *The Order of the Garter*, by Elias Ashmole

#### THE CHANCELLOR'S BADGE

The rose emblem of the Brotherhoods of the Quest is represented surrounded by the band of the Garter and the motto of the Order.

*The Holy Grail*

The Grail legends constitute a considerable body of mystical tradition. Although the accounts reveal certain common elements, the details indicate that a central theme was enlarged and embellished over an extended period of time. The Grail Cycle, as it has descended to us, originated among the Troubadours, the jongleurs, and the jesters. In England the Grail Quest became the central object of the Knights of the Round Table. The Arthurian Cycle in turn inspired the rituals of the Garter. This noble Order certainly belongs among esoteric Fraternities and Leagues of Chivalry, which perpetuated the secret doctrine of antiquity.

Elias Ashmole wrote an extensive history of the Garter, and was himself an officer of the Order. Referring to St. George, the patron of the Garter knights, Ashmole wrote: "It is recorded that King Arthur paid St. George, whose red cross is the badge of the Garter, the most particular honors; for he advanced his effigy in one of his banners, which was about two hundred years after his martyrdom, and very early for a country so remote from Cappadocia to have him in reverence and esteem." The reference to Cappadocia links the legend of St. George with the genealogy of the Grail Kings, for the Senaboriden originated in this region.

The St. George of the Garter is certainly the Perseus of Greek mythology who rescued the virgin, Andromeda, from a sea monster. Although the dragon episode is emphasized by Jacobus de Voragine in the *Golden Legend*, the actual life of the Saint is so obscure and uncertain that he is listed among those revered persons whose acts are known only to God. He seems to have been martyred in Palestine, and there is some evidence that two men of the same name have been involved in the popular tradition.



So great was the skill of the medieval storytellers and poets that their narratives have come to be accepted as fragments of a sober history. Several ancient communities claimed, for example, to possess the Holy Grail. It was supposed to have been in the keeping of the patriarch of Jerusalem in the 13th century, and the Christians of Constantinople, at about the same time, claimed that it was in their keeping. In the cathedral at Genoa, a green dish or vessel is preserved, which, according to the medieval Genoese, was the sacred cup. The vase or basin, which once contained the royal blood (*Sangre Real*), was supposed to have been carved from a gigantic emerald, which had once been the crest jewel of Lucifer. This glorious stone was struck from the helmet of the Prince of the Archangels by the sword of St. Michael, the champion of heaven, during the conflict which followed the revolt of the angels. The shining green stone fell into the abyss of outer space, where it remained until it was recovered by the angels and fashioned into the Holy Grail. The Emperor Napoleon I, a realist in matters religious, took the green vessel from Genoa to Paris, where he had it chemically tested. The highly-prized chalice proved to be green glass.

The legend of the heavenly emerald is reminiscent of the account of the *Smaragdine Tablet*, traditionally believed to have been discovered in the tomb of Hermes by Alexander the Great. Unfortunately, this Hermetic Emerald has proved as elusive as Lucifer's crest jewel, and sober reflection increases our admiration for the splendid inventions of the Troubadours. They were indeed universally learned, according to the measure of their times, for they drew upon a wealth of curious lore in the production of their wonderful and beautiful hero tales.

The legends were received with sympathetic understanding by the Bards and knightly Orders of Britain. In

the vale of Avalon in Somerset, Western England, stands the ruins of Glastonbury Abbey. Here, according to the songs of the gentle singers, Joseph of Arimathea nearly two thousand years ago brought the holy chalice, which is now said to lie buried beneath Glastonbury Tor. The Abbey ruins represent the earliest Christian foundation in England. The first church was a little wattled building believed to have been erected by Joseph of Arimathea about A. D. 61. The great church, later built upon the site, and all the monastery buildings were destroyed by fire in A. D. 1184, but rebuilding started immediately. In the year 1191 the bodies of King Arthur and Queen Guinevere were found on the south side of the Lady Chapel at Glastonbury. These royal remains were later placed in a black marble tomb close to the Abbey. This tomb survived until the 16th century.

Around the legends of the Holy Grail in England were developed the rituals, symbols, and emblems of the Order of the Round Table. The circle of knights gathered about the Table, which was the mirror of chivalry, representing Jesus and his apostles at the Last Supper. There is nothing to indicate in the epic of the Round Table that the questing knights sought the Grail in the ruins of Glastonbury. Such inconsistencies, however, only reveal the unhistorical dimensions of the legend. From the Arthurian assembly, the Mysteries of the Grail kingdom passed to the Knights of the Garter, whose Order represented the secret kingdom of the heroes.

In a familiar form of the story, Joseph of Arimathea, accompanied by a small retinue, reached England in the 1st century A. D. He brought with him the sister of Veronica, who carried the napkin impressed with the features of Christ. This napkin is the *Vera Icon*, the True Representation, from which the name Veronica is derived.



In recent years, efforts have been made to prove that the plain silver cup used by Christ and his apostles in the celebration of the Last Supper is enclosed within the great Chalice of Antioch. This chalice, which was on exhibition in the House of Religion at the Century of Progress Exposition in Chicago, now rests in the vault of a bank in New York City. Thus it would appear that two cups are involved in the legend: one, the chalice of the sacrament, and the other, the vase of the sacred blood.

The Quest of the Holy Grail was the most important and most mysterious of the legends of the Orders of Chivalry. The knights of the Quest were supposed to be seeking a cup guarded by angels, which usually appeared to the pure of heart in a circle of splendid light and song, and veiled with a silken cloth. The blood of Christ, ever-flowing in the Grail, signified his true doctrine, and the cup which contained it was his Esoteric School, the chalice of his adepts. The search for the Grail was the spiritual adventure of regeneration, and the trials and tribulations of the knights concealed under veiled terms the story of initiation into the spiritual Mysteries of Christ.

As von Eschenbach reports the legends, the Grail was also a miraculous cup of replenishment. It yielded all manner of food and drink, and all who hungered after righteousness were sustained by its bounty. This account is all the more remarkable when the same mystic-poet states that the Grail was not a cup or vessel, but a stone. We may, then, think again of the Philosophers' Stone and the Hermetic Emerald. These several stories are fragments of one concept, and must be so considered.

We know that a division took place within the structure of the Christian communion at a very early date. The mystical sects, long-nourished by Diana, the great mother-goddess of the Ephesians, refused to accept the exoteric



religion that rapidly laid claim to infallibility. Arthur Edward Waite wrote extensively on the Orders of the Quest. In one book\* he attempted a survey of the entire field.

Harold Bayley, after pointing out numerous inconsistencies in Mr. Waite's approach, advances his own conclusions with considerable solid scholarship. The Hidden Church of the Grail was more than a mere pre-Reformation, Protestant motion; it was an esoteric Fraternity, a secular mystical communion, a conviction that the quest for truth was possible without benefit of clergy. This lodge of initiates, dedicated to the perpetuation of the universal religion and driven into obscurity by the dominant religious and political factions, existed secretly for many centuries subsequent to its disappearance from the sight of history.

Alfred Nutt, in his *Legends of the Holy Grail*, quotes Helinandus, whose opinions reflect the esoteric cult of the Grail, thus: "Christ Himself wrote the Book of the Holy Grail and save it naught else but the Lord's Prayer and the judgment on the woman taken in adultery." From this we may assume that the legends were held to be the most sacred tradition in Christendom and the true doctrine of Christ. It is not hard to understand that a dominant Church would oppose vigorously a sect claiming a spiritual authority superior to the apostolic succession.

Persecution, however, could not destroy completely the Secret Schools; rather it scattered the initiates, and in this way spread the very doctrines which it sought to eliminate. The bishops of the Grail Church had no distinguishing clerical habit, and between the 13th and 17th centuries, they were wanderers upon the face of the earth. Wherever

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\*See *The Hidden Church of the Holy Graal, its Legends and Symbolism considered in their Affinity with certain Mysteries of Initiation and other Traces of a Secret Tradition in Christian Times* (London, 1909).

they tarried they drew to themselves oppressed liberals and sowed the seeds of spiritual and secular liberty.

After the decline of chivalry, the initiates of the Grail Church made use of the guilds and the trade unions to disseminate their convictions. As times became more liberal, these survivors of an ancient faith found poetry, drama, literature, and music excellent means for spreading the gospel of an ideal human state. The confusion of modern living obscures the descent of traditions, but thoughtfulness will discover the facts. "The Glory of God," wrote Francis Bacon, "is to conceal a thing, but the glory of the king is to find it out."

### *The Grail Kings*

It is difficult to formulate a brief statement of the origin of the Grail legend. Perhaps for practical purposes we may say that a philosopher and astrologer by the name of Flegetanis, while studying with the Arabs in their colleges at Toledo, compiled an account of the mysterious Grail. His records were discovered by Meister Guiot de Provins. This Guiot is the Kyot of the German version. Guiot was a jongleur, which was one of the grades or divisions of the Troubadours. It was from this jongleur, who was in Mainz in A. D. 1184, that the celebrated Troubadour and Knight Templar, Wolfram von Eschenbach, who died about A. D. 1220, derived the inspiration for his *Titurel*. He was followed by Albrecht von Scharfenberg, who wrote *Der Jungere Titurel* about A. D. 1270.

In the *Titurel* legends of Wolfram von Eschenbach, we have the source of the material used by Richard Wagner in the development of his Grail Cycle of music dramas. Of this circumstance, Harold Bayley writes: "If I were a believer in the theory of reincarnation, the spirit of a Troubadour Grail Knight reappeared, I should say, in the





1545 : HANS SACHS N. ALER 3 I. IAR

# **Auff heutiger Tag Schul geben etliche** **Lutheger der Kunst den Meistersingern etliche Gaben zu versingen.**

Hans Sachs from Nuremberg.

Darumb soll erstlich in dem Herp-  
 fe gesungen: Admetus und as-  
 der werte Herp Hymen.

Soll das gemessen sein: 12. bis auf 12.  
 Jedem gleiches aber den 11. bis auf 12.

In dem Hauptsingen soll gesun-  
 gen werden aus dem alten  
 und neuen Testament.

Ein botenmessen von 10. bis auf 10.  
 10. in jedem aber den 10. bis auf 10.



Man wird auch vorher ein schön  
 netz Lied auff einer Art von Weg  
 zusammen singen.

Die Sanger singen zu Sachers Lob!  
 Das Loblied der Kunst das eine Preis!  
 Was das best ist das den man preisen!  
 Soll auch in dem Lied besonnen!  
 Darum die Sanger thun auch bestes.

Wer solches hören will / der setzen nach ge-  
 haltenen Wörtern Preisen zu C. Sachs  
 sein je mehr man ansetzt.

HANS SACHS  
 Meistersinger of Nuremberg



person of Richard Wagner. The philosophy of Wagner was a remarkable blend of Catholic and Protestant, Christian and Buddhist ideas; it was curiously similar in this respect to the philosophy displayed in papermarks and wood blocks. Wagner appreciated that the highest and most potent mode of playing upon Humanity's heartstrings was by a combination of Music, Poetry and Stage-craft. His themes center around the mystery of the St. Grail and kindred myths. In his Mastersingers (The next inheritors of the Minnesingers or Troubadours) he gives us Hans Sachs, the historic cobbler-poet. In Sachs we see a representative of the unnumbered paper-poets, printer-poets and other artisans who combined work with aspiration. Sachs was a typical Son of the Dawn, one of those whom Bacon terms *Fillii Aurorae*, men 'full of towardness and hope.' \*\*

Although Hans Sachs served his apprenticeship as a shoemaker and practiced the trade throughout life, he had received a good education in Nuremberg, and traveled extensively among the German cities. He was a Lutheran, and selected literature as an avocation. He composed over 4000 *Meisterlieder* and some 2000 stories and plays. Sachs exercised considerable social and political influence, and Wagner introduced him in *Die Meistersinger* as a patron of intellectual and artistic freedom.

It is customary to assume, as pointed out by Dr. Karl Rosenkranz, that there are three distinct Grail traditions: the Titurel tradition which originated in Asia, the Parsifal tradition which is French, originating probably in Provence or Anjou, and the Lohengrin tradition which originated in Belgium. The history of Lohengrin, originally Garin-le-Loherein, is attributed to Hugo Metillus, who flourished

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\*See *A New Light on the Renaissance* (London, 1909).

about A. D. 1150. Thus all three stories or elements of the Grail saga can be traced to the areas where Albigenian communities flourished. It is said that Guiot, after contacting the Arabic records at Toledo, which had been written by a "heathen," searched all Europe for further details, which he could not discover until he examined the *Chronicle of Anjou*. It is all most mysterious and confusing, but the inevitable conclusion is that the Grail legends are intimately associated with the descent of Asiatic and North African mystical Societies through that period now referred to as the Dark Ages.

Several writers of the German school, with the thoroughness for which the intellectuals of that nation are justly famous, have studied the *Titurel* and *Der Jungere Titurel* in an effort to discover what may be described as the descent of the Grail kings. Their conclusions are most stimulating if we penetrate the outward pseudohistorical reports. It is immediately evident that the history of the Grail is the symbolical story of the descent of the Gnosis in Europe.

At the time the Roman Emperor Vespasian was laying siege to the city of Jerusalem, there was in his retinue Sennabor, Prince of Cappadocia, and his three sons: Parille, Azubar, and Sabbilar. Although Cappadocia was a Roman province, the root of the Senaboriden was in Asia. It should be noted that the names of these important Cappadocians had a distinctly Arabic flavor. Sennabor may be from the Arabic *senber*, meaning a *sage*.

After the fall of Jerusalem, the sons of Sennabor were entertained at Rome, and Parille was given the daughter of Vespasian in marriage. Her name was Argusilla, or Orgusille. Perille also received properties in France, and his brothers were given Anjou and Cornwall. To Parille and Argusilla a son named Titurisone was born, and he is referred to as the "stem of the Grail-race." Parille was

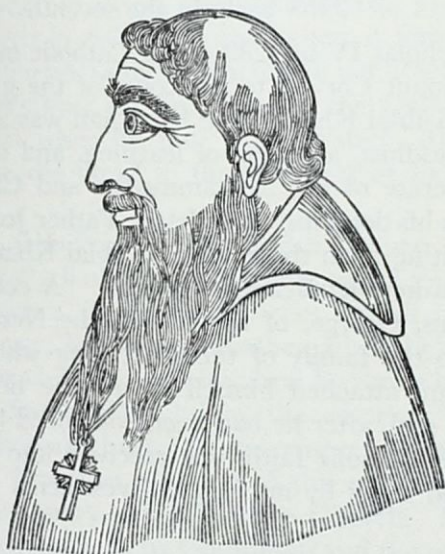
poisoned when attempting to reform his people, and Titurison became king. He married Elizabel of Arragonia, and their son was Titurel, the first of the Grail kings. Titurel, with the aid of the peoples of Provencal, Arles, and Lotharingia, conquered the heathen nations of Auvergene and Navarre, and had many wonderful adventures in the service of the true faith.

It was Titurel who was instructed by visions to build the temple for the preservation of the Holy Grail. The site was revealed to him by an angel, and so carefully hidden was this spot on the far side of the Pyrenees that none could discover it except by the aid of God. Like Odin's great Temple at Uppsala, the sacred shrine of Mont Salvat was built by miraculous means. By the grace of God, Titurel lived to great age and was four hundred years old when the Grail Temple was completed. The Divine Power then instructed him to marry and establish a royal line. The wife chosen for him was a holy maiden, by name Richonde, whose father was the king of a Spanish province. There were two children. The son, Frimutel, became the second Grail king, and he in turn had five children, the eldest being Amfortis, who succeeded his father in the royal line. Among the children also was a daughter, Herzeloide (the sorrowing heart), who was the mother of Parsifal. There was another daughter, Urepanse, who is referred to in the legend as the mother of Prester John.

Finally Titurel, having reached the age of nearly five hundred years, died in India, having warned both his son and his grandson that their lives would be filled with suffering because they had not conquered their human frailties. Parsifal was King of the Grail for ten years, and after the death of his son Lohengrin, who was murdered, he also returned to Asia. It is important to note that although the Wagnerian Mystery-dramas imply that the Grail legend



belonged in the Age of Chivalry, the only available date in the earlier forms of the tradition is that of the death of Lohengrin, which took place approximately five hundred years after the birth of Christ. An excellent summary of this story is to be found in *Traces of a Hidden Tradition in Masonry and Medieval Mysticism*, by Isobel Cooper-Oakley. In order to develop the Asiatic phase of the story, it would be necessary to examine the records of the Nestorian Christians. This requires a complete program to estimate



—From *Peking*, by Abbe Favier

JOHN OF MOUNT CORVIN

Founder of the Catholic mission in China.

the degree that Nestorianism and Manichaeism mingled their streams with those of Indian Buddhism.

While at first thought it seems remarkable that a Troubadour like Wolfram von Eschenbach should associate the Grail legend with Inner Asia, the circumstance is not so

strange as might appear. Christian missionaries of the Syrian Church are believed to have reached China as early as the 3rd century A. D. John Kesson of the British Museum, in defining what he calls the second epoch in the history of Christianity in China, writes: "We approach the period when the Nestorian, or rather the Chaldean or Syrian Christians, as they call themselves, spread so rapidly, planting Christianity in the heart of Asia, carrying it to the remotest East, and giving rise to the belief that they entered the provinces of China early in the seventh century."\*

Pope Nicholas IV in 1289 sent a Catholic mission, under John of Mount Corvin, to the court of the great Mongol Emperor, Kublai Khan. The Ka Khan was a sincere and studious Buddhist, a patron of learning, and most tolerant and considerate of the Mohammedan and Christian subjects within his domains. In a letter, Father John of Mount Corvin, writing from the court of Kublai Khan, makes the following rather significant statement: "A certain king of these regions, George, of the sect of the Nestorians, who belonged to the family of the great king who was called Prestor John, attached himself to me the first year that I was here, and, after he had been convinced by me of the truth of the Catholic faith, was received into the *Ordines Minores* and stood by me in royal vestments while I said mass."

In 1338 a delegation of sixteen persons sent by the Emperor of China arrived at the court of the Pope, who was then throned at Avignon. The emperor asked for the papal benediction, and further requested that the commission be allowed to bring back horses and other rarities of the West. Thus, although the Christian nations were comparatively uninformed about the beliefs of Asia, many

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\*See *The Cross and the Dragon* (London, 1854).

Eastern sovereigns and princes possessed considerable information, even at an early time, about the life of Jesus and the rituals of Catholicism.

It would seem most unlikely that the Franciscan Father, John of Mount Corvin, manufactured the story of the Eastern king who was descended from the family of Prestor John. All the available records bearing upon the life of this good Father indicate that he was a man of the highest integrity. He further makes the simple statement that this king, whom he converted, was a Nestorian. If a Christian Empire existed in Asia at an early time, it must have been under the influence of the Nestorians, if not actually founded by them. We may ask why Titurel, the Grail king, journeyed to Asia when his time came to die? Also, why did Parsifal take the Grail to the Far East at the end of his own reign?

Nestorius, who flourished in the 5th century, was a victim of that same Cyril of Alexandria responsible for the martyrdom of Hypatia, the mathematician. Cyril accused Nestorius of heresy, and he was anathematized by a synod presided over by Cyril and one hundred fifty-nine bishops. The synod was declared invalid by the emperor, because the accused bishop and his friends were never permitted a hearing. Thus Nestorius was one of the early victims of the political machinery of the Western Church. It is believed that he was influenced by Gnosticism and the sect of Manes. It would be quite reasonable, therefore, that if the Grail kingdom, itself under the ban of the Church, sought refuge in a distant land, it would choose a location dominated by convictions similar to its own. The Nestorians, like the Albigensians, practiced a mystical communion and covenant outside the self-proclaimed Church of Christendom.

According to the earlist authorities, the Holy Grail was not only a cup or the sacred stone *Exillis*, but also was a



mysterious gospel, a secret book. Eugene Aroux, the Catholic writer, favors this belief; and some have gone so far as to suggest that this book was the esoteric doctrine of the Templars and contributed to the Masonic tradition. It is evident that the story of Titurel and the symbolical genealogy of the Grail kings relate to the descent of Schools or Orders of initiates. Titurel represents the ancient wisdom and, like the mysterious Father C. R. C., is the personification of the Mystery Schools which serve the shrine of Eternal Truth. In the descent, the scene is gradually shifted from Jerusalem to Rome, and then from Rome to those areas in France which were the seats of the Albigenses.

Although these heretics were scattered by the Crusade against them, led by the Dominicans, their power was never completely broken. At a later date, another interesting and mysterious person appeared in Provence. He, too, left a strange legacy of poetic quatrains, and was the greatest prophet of the modern world. In the opening of his prophetic centuries, Michael Nostradamus describes himself as seated upon a tripod, like the priestess of ancient Delphi. His verses, which have never been completely interpreted, were written in the Provencal dialect.

To show that a body of lore continues through the centuries, extremely difficult to trace but linked definitely with the area under consideration, let us quote a few lines from a letter dated February 12, 1787, and addressed to a Theosophical-Masonic Society which met in Middle Temple, London. The letter was signed by Count Grabianka, one of the names assumed by Count Cagliostro. The letter is from "the Society at Avignon," and one section reads: "Yes, dear brethren, there exists a Society which the LORD JESUS CHRIST has formed. It was in the year 1779, and in the north of Europe, that he was pleased to lay the foundations thereof. Some of those who were

first favored by his choice received afterward orders to go to the south. Five of this number being reunited, expected, for sometime past, their very dear brother GRABIANKA, etc. The rest, who are dispersed in different countries, earnestly expect the same order. We know already, that one of them, who has nearly finished his first course, will very soon join us. The ensuing spring will bring back fifteen, and we expect many more brethren and sisters that we know will be called in the course of this year."

Is it not curious that Cagliostro, the Grand Cophte of the Egyptian Rite of Freemasonry, should be associated with the Brotherhoods of Avignon? Is it not equally interesting that it should be generally acknowledged that the flamboyant Count was an agent of the surviving but elusive Knights Templars? To top this unusual sequence of events, it should be mentioned that the Lodge which Cagliostro visited in London was dedicated to the Swedenborgian Rite of Freemasonry, and that Cagliostro appeared among them claiming that the Secret Society in Avignon was practicing the esoteric Masonry of Emanuel Swedenborg. This industrious Masonic enterprise reminds us that in 1781 a Lodge of Masons was established in Paris for the purpose of uniting the Illuminism of Adam Weishaupt, the Bavarian esotericist, with the new mystical revelations of Swedenborg. The roster of this industrious Lodge included the names of Count Cagliostro, Anton Mesmer, and the Comte de St.-Germain. By this circumstance, St.-Germain is shown to be profoundly involved in the Bavarian Illuminati, the Asiatic brethren, and the Secret Societies of Avignon.

While the tradition may be confused and obscure, it is evident that we are confronted with the descent of a Secret School which existed from the beginning of the Christian era and formed an Esoteric Empire. This empire was known at one time as the Kingdom of the Grail, and was function-



ing as a political force in Europe as late as the rise of Napoleon I. Nearly every important transcendentalist of the last thousand years can be traced as being affiliated with this hidden empire. Research will fill in the few and inconsequential breaks in this golden chain of initiates, but the Temple on the three peaks of Salvaterra remains hidden unless it is revealed by the will of God.

*Prestor John, the Phantom Emperor of the World*

In the year A. D. 1144, Hugo, Bishop of Gabala, reported that a certain John, who governed as priest-king in an inaccessible region of the Far East, had, together with his people, been converted to Nestorianism. This John belonged to the race of the three Magi (adepts), and so extraordinary was his wealth that he carried a scepter of pure emeralds. In this way the rumor spread about Europe that a mysterious Christian monk was the supreme ruler over the nations of Asia. From some remote fastness of the trans-Himalaya, the power of this man extended throughout the three Indies. In 1165, kings and princes of Europe, including Barbarossa, received letters and long documents from the Emperor of the East. In these epistles, the writer described himself as John the Presbyter, Priest of the Almighty Power of God and of Our Lord Jesus Christ. One of these letters to his friend, Manuel, Prince of Constantinople, opened with the words, "I, Prester John, the Lord of Lords, surpass all under heaven in virtue, in riches, and in power. . . ."

In this document, Prestor John devoted considerable space to the description of his empire. Among other curious notes, he describes monstrous ants that dug gold out of the earth, and fish from whose bodies might be extracted imperishable purple dyes. There were also pebbles which gave forth light, restored the sight of the blind, and ren-





—From *Ho Preste Joam Das Indias* (Lisbon, 1540)

PRESTOR JOHN AS EMPEROR OF ETHIOPIA

dered the possessor invisible. Here flowed the Fountain of Youth, and there was a sea of sand in which swam a strange kind of fish. Here, also, was the home of the salamander, a worm which lived in fire, and from whose

wool were woven the incombustible garments of the king, which were washed by flames. (Salamander's wool is the ancient name for asbestos.)

In the land of Prester John, there was no poverty, no crime, and no vice. Before his palace, which was splendid beyond description, was a magic mirror by which the emperor could see throughout his dominions and detect all conspiracy against the State. He was constantly waited upon by seven kings, sixty dukes, and three hundred sixty-five counts. Twelve archbishops sat at his right hand and twenty bishops at his left. Yet, with all this grandeur, he was a modest and humble man who did not rejoice in worldly splendor, and chose only to be called Presbyter, even though his butler was an archbishop, his chamberlain was a bishop, and his chief cook was a king.

Early travelers to the Far East brought back lurid accounts of this strange monarch, who maintained a standing army of a million and a half warriors, and was complete master of the birthplace of the sun. Even Marco Polo returned with an extravagant story of a Christian Emperor of Tibet, whose colonies included Persia, Ceylon, and Siam, and whose powers were limitless. It is impossible to dismiss the story of Prester John as a mere fable, for legendary men do not write letters or send embassies. On the other hand, no account of this strange man is to be found in Oriental histories, which were amazingly comprehensive.

Wolfram von Eschenbach was the most important of the medieval German poets, and was a Minnesinger. In his epic poem, *Parzifal*, he connected for the first time the legend of the Holy Grail with the history of Prester John. Parsifal, the mythical King of the Holy Grail, carried the sacred cup to Asia, where he received the name of Prester John. Thus we see that the Secret Orders of Europe were



involved in the perpetuation of the curious fable of the Asiatic Lord of Lords.

After the era of exploration, by which the boundaries and proportions of countries came to be known with greater accuracy, the location of Prester John's empire shifted from one inaccessible area to another, and finally was identified with Abyssinia. At the beginning of the 15th century, the Abyssinian-Christian priests described their kingdom as the land of Prester John. This story gained immediate popularity, and the princes of Europe sent ambassadors in search of him. Unfortunately, these men were never heard of again. The Negus of Abyssinia combined in his person certain temporal and spiritual powers, and the name of John occurs frequently in the list of the Abyssinian kings. This entire theory, however, was finally abandoned.

The oldest map on which America is mentioned, dated 1507, placed the country of John the Presbyter in the area of Tibet. The following description appeared: "This is the land of the good King and lord, known as Prester John, lord of all Eastern and Southern India, lord of all the kings of India, in whose mountains are found all kinds of precious stones."\*

In the first hundred years after the invention of printing, several books were published showing pictures of Prester John in his royal robes. Because of the lack of geographical data, many believed the boundaries of Abyssinia to extend to China. In fact, the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope was due principally to the efforts of the King of Portugal to communicate with Prester John. The long, sad story of the search for the phantom emperor can be studied at length in *The Land of Prester John, a Chronicle of Portuguese Exploration*, by Elaine Sanceau.

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\*See *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (article, Prester John).



Most writers who have examined the tradition about Prester John have overlooked the one source from which they might have secured the real key to the mystery. Heckethorn was working in the right direction when he pointed out that the legend originated in the resemblance between Buddhism and Christianity. He explains that there was in China in the 12th century a great Mongol tribe professing Buddhism, which, by travelers, was mistaken for an Oriental-Christian religion. The Nestorian-Christians dwelling among the Mongols called the head of this Buddhist sect "John the Priest," and hence arose the tradition that in the heart of Asia there was a Christian Church, whose Pope bore the title of Prester John.

The original location given for the empire of Prester John was the area of the Gobi Desert, where he lived in an enchanted palace in the mountains. If you ask Eastern initiates to describe the Northern Paradise, called Dejung or Shambhala, the mysterious city of the adepts, they will tell you that it is in the heart of the Gobi Desert. In the old sand of Shamo, the Ancient Mother, stands the Temple of the Invisible Government of the World. High in the etheric atmosphere of the planet it floats, supported upon an outcropping of azoic rock, called the Sacred or Imperishable Island.

The fabled mahatmas of Asia should not be regarded as isolated initiates but as members of an exalted Fraternity, which has been called the Trans-Himalayan Brotherhood. This order of exalted men, servants of the Lord of the World, are the spiritual governors of the mundane sphere. They gather at prescribed intervals in the Temple of Shambhala on the Sacred Island and give allegiance to the Lord of Lords, the King of Kings, Regent of the Sun, and Master of the World.

That we are dealing with a cosmic myth and a story of the Esoteric Schools is evident, when we remember the seven kings (planets), twelve archbishops (signs of the zodiac), and three hundred sixty-five counts (days of the year), and other obviously symbolical numbers. Eschenbach realized this, for the Order of the Holy Grail, with its temple and its knights, is only a veiled reference to Shambhala. It seems that the Invisible Government was involved in the crisis caused by the rise of Genghis Khan. It never occurred to the Christian historians that the Sacred City of the gods could be anything except an Asiatic version of Rome. Beneath the name and legend of Prester John is concealed the identity of the unknown and unnamed thirteenth and highest adept of the Philosophic Empire. Naturally, he could not be found, but the Golden City sought by the Portuguese is the same abode of the god-men that Lao-tse was seeking when he departed alone into the sand of Shamo, riding on his green ox.

# **The Adepts**

**In The Western Esoteric Tradition**

**By MANLY PALMER HALL**



**Part Two**

**Orders Of The Great Work**



# THE ADEPTS

In the Western Esoteric Tradition

By MANLY PALMER HALL

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ORDERS OF THE GREAT WORK

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By MANLY PALMER HALL

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This work is a section of a comprehensive survey of the adept tradition, which will be complete in fifteen parts. It is issued in the present form because of the unprecedented rise in the cost of book-production. Only in this way can the material be made available to students at a reasonable price.

# ORDERS OF THE GREAT WORK

## FOREWORD

During the Hermetic recension in Europe, the title of adept was applied almost exclusively to the Masters of operative alchemy. Certain philosopher-chemists who had gained unusual distinction—as Paracelsus, Lully, and Ripley—were referred to as adepts by later authors and disciples of the art. The title had a larger implication, however, when applied to those unnamed Masters to whose uncertain activities there are scattered references in the tracts published by aspiring chemists.

These unidentified *adepti*, like the Perfect Ones—the wandering Albigensian Bishops—had no certain identity or residence, but appeared miraculously in response to the earnest prayers of devout disciples. The adepts seemed to possess the power to examine into the hearts and minds of men, to weigh motives, and to determine merit. They appeared fortuitously at the precise moment when their advice and guidance were most necessary. They seldom lingered long in one vicinity, and justified their comings and goings by assuming the habits and trades of journeymen.

All who claimed adeptship were not honorable or sincere. Many chemists were deceived by pretenders who found it profitable to exploit the unwary. A curious little work titled *The Complete History of an Unknown Man*, which appeared as an appendix to an early edition of the *Fama Fraternitatis*, describes a suspected adept whose specialty was whistling rats out of houses. This Hermetic Pied Piper passed through the town of Wetzlar in 1615, claiming to be a Brother of the Rosy Cross. The account was faith-



fully prepared by George Molther, the town physician, as proof of strange and wonderful things.

The true adepts carried means of identification of a kind not to be discovered by the profane. They could not be distinguished by garb or appearance, though often they conveyed the impression of being foreigners. Sometimes these adepts revealed the supreme secret, but more often they merely proved the possibility of the Great Work by bestowing a small amount of the precious Stone. Such gifts frequently led to disaster if the recipient of the powder of transmutation advertised his good fortune without proper caution.

Albrecht Dürer, the celebrated German painter and engraver, is reported to have left a wood-block print depicting a council of the Hermetic adepts. The picture is extremely elusive and has not been identified with certainty among his enormous output. There is a considerable literature relating to the mysterious appearances of adepts and the wonders which they performed, but the examples which we have included in the present section will suffice.

It was not until the 18th century that the European adepts took on the full habiliments of Eastern mahatmas. With the rise of the Masonic Fraternity, interest in practical alchemy gave place to the restoration of the Hermetic Schools of universal philosophy. Wisdom, and not wealth, inspired the search for the higher secrets of the esoteric tradition. The adepts came to be regarded as wonderfully enlightened persons, like the patriarchs of old. They formed a Grand Lodge, a secret Fraternity of illuminated Master Builders. Craft Masonry did not satisfy completely the aspirations of the earnest human soul. The rites and rituals were but the symbols of sublime truths guarded by Secret Orders of initiates. This has been referred to as the romantic period of Freemasonry.

The present section of our outline of the adept tradition advances the hypothesis that the wandering sages were bound together in a vast project of social reformation. This is no more than is implied by the second "agreement" by which the Brothers of the Rosy Cross bound themselves. We have no strict accounting of what passed between the adepts and those disciples which they visited and instructed. The Bacstrom diaries suggest that under the symbolism of the bestowal of the Stone, a ritual of initiation was to be understood. Naturally, the true secrets were communicated "lip to ear" and under oath.

Thus, the adepts were recruiting the Sons of Light, who were to form the Army of the Elect. These were instructed to remain in readiness until "the day be with us." The inner machinery of this program was too subtle to be captured in the pages of prosaic history. Only the consequences appeared as "effects deprived of their cause." As the philosophic program unfolded, the adepts revealed themselves as Princes of the Invisible Empire. Within this Empire, there were all grades and degrees of citizens which gave allegiance to the Philosopher-King. Thus, the hierophant of the ancient Mysteries, robed in blue and gold, bearing the scepter and the ankh and crowned with a coronet of battlements, was dimly perceived enthroned between the Pillars of the Porch of the Everlasting House.

The esoteric priesthood was divided into several grades or degrees, of which, in ascending order, can be mentioned accepted students, disciples, initiates, and adepts. From Pythagoras, the first European adept, to the Masonic restoration of "the ladder of the sages," there has been no essential change in the internal structure of the adept tradition. The mathematical mystery of the structure of the Great School becomes obvious in times of general enlightenment, and retires into a state of obscurity as nations or

ances fall away from the spiritual tradition. The pattern of the Invisible Empire is impressed like a seal upon all the physical institutions which it fashions and overshadows. Each of the Secret Societies is a microcosm of the whole design, and these microcosms when clustered in their proper geometric arrangement become the petals of a vast cosmic flower, like the mystic rose of Dante's vision and the white lotus blossom of the Eastern Mysteries.

The book of the adepts, like the *Mutus Liber*, is a book without words. The truth must be discovered through the contemplation of certain motions in the world and in man. We sincerely hope that by tracing the descent of the adept tradition through its appearances we may convey at the same time something of the substance behind the shadow. In this way, our project becomes in its turn a microcosm or compression of a sequence of events and occurrences. Any detail may be argued; any particular may be dissected to no avail, but the compound exhibits the signature of the Great Work.

Manly Palmer Hall.

Los Angeles, California; June 1949.



# THE ADEPTS

## ORDERS OF THE GREAT WORK

### *Alchemical Foundations*

The foundations of alchemy must be examined both traditionally and historically. Often it is difficult to estimate correctly the factual elements involved in the origin and descent of arts and sciences. Most of the essential branches of learning emerge into the light of sober recording at a comparatively late date and when the subjects themselves are well-advanced in both theory and practice. Actually we have no adequate knowledge of the beginnings of mathematics, astronomy, music, medicine, or chemistry. These divisions of man's thoughtful inquiries about life and living are rooted in a dark, unknown earth, and emerge gradually from the prehistoric sphere of legendry to bear their fruit in the light of historic times.

The traditional account of the origin of chemistry involves a number of extravagant pretensions. Alchemy was included in the curriculum of the College of the Angels, which Adam attended in Paradise before the Fall. Moses and Aaron were instructed in the mystery of transmutation by God himself, and became great adepts in the secrets of the Stone. When the angels descended to take wives from among the daughters of men, as recorded in the *Book of*

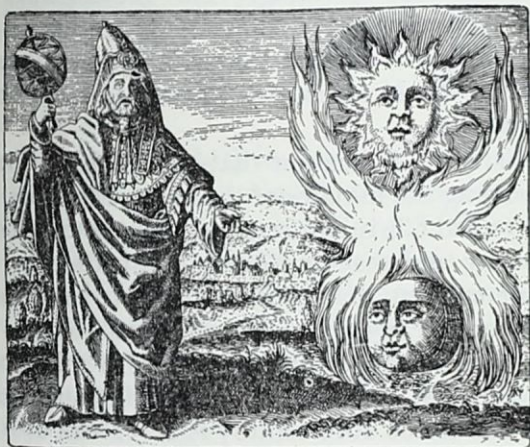
*Enoch*, they revealed to mortals the precious chemistry for the regeneration of elements. According to another account, the fallen angels, out of revenge, taught men the art of making gold, realizing that wealth would impede the progress of the human soul.

The later Egyptians believed that alchemy was revealed to mankind by the god Thoth, Lord of the Mind and Secretary of Nature. Thoth emerged as the initiate-priest-king, Hermes Trismegistus, or the Thrice-Greatest. Very little is known about this obscure adept who has been honored as the founder of the Hermetic arts. It is a moot question in the minds of many historians as to whether he really existed as a great philosopher, or whether he was a symbolic personification of a secret doctrine of chemistry, guarded by the priests of the Egyptian Mysteries. For centuries the term *hermetic* has been confused with alchemy or magic. Actually the Hermetic art is theurgy, the science of the perfection of man through internal illumination.

Most of the alchemical writers of the medieval period refer to the old legends as true and faithful reports, but proof is completely lacking. Scarcely any of the illustrious prophets and sages of old times are omitted from the traditional lists of philosophic chemists. Numerous books, presumably by these remote authors, were circulated throughout Europe, the Near East, and North Africa. We are justified in assuming that references to any extraordinary antiquity for alchemical speculation should be regarded as allegorical or fabulous rather than literal.

Even the origin of the word *alchemy* is disputed. The prefix *al* suggests an Arabian source, and the Arabs, especially the mystical sects which flourished among them, were enthusiastic exponents of the art. The second syllable, *chemi*, is reminiscent of the Egyptian *khem* and the hieroglyph *khmi*, which signifies dark earth and, by extension,

simply darkness or blackness. Old authors refer to alchemy as the science of the Egyptians, the dark or hidden art. It is not unreasonable, therefore, that the Egyptian word *khmi* could have given us our modern word *chemistry*, and that the prefix *al*, forming *alchemy* or *alchemy*, properly means God-chemistry or divine chemistry or, more generally, the "divine art." The basic axiom of alchemy is that man perfects Nature through art. Art is the wisdom to



—From *Symbola Aureae Mensae*, etc.

#### HERMES POINTING TO THE MYSTERY OF THE STONE

Here the solar and lunar principles are represented  
united by the philosophical fire.

know and the skill to do. Wisdom perfects art, and art perfects wisdom; and wisdom perfected by art is the wise man's Stone. He who possesses it is master of the world.

Actually, the same uncertainty surrounds the source of mystical chemistry that shrouds the reorganization of the Esoteric Schools in the early Christian world. There does not seem to be any solid body of Western records referring to alchemy earlier than the 1st century A.D. It is possible



that prior to this time the subject was included among the arcana of the Mysteries. If so, the secret was well-kept in spite of the hints and intimations to the contrary. Philosophical chemistry appears for the first time as a subject of general interest in the spheres of Hellenic influence in Syria and North Africa. The art was brought to the attention of a disbelieving world by the Greek and Syrian schools in Alexandria. The 2nd and 3rd centuries A.D. cover the period of this first flowering. The circumstances are involved in the decline of the pagan Mysteries and the gradual rise of the North African Christian communities. The Gnostics and the Neoplatonists undoubtedly contributed to this emergence.

There is every indication that philosophic alchemy developed among the initiates of the pagan Mysteries, abetted by the heretical Christian sects that refused to acknowledge the authority and teaching of the early Church. It was convenient even at that time to circulate the report that alchemy was already an ancient and honored art. Unless new discoveries change the complexion of things, we may say that the first cycle of alchemical literature extended from the 2nd to the 10th century A.D. These date boundaries cannot be shifted by report alone, but must remain until codexes bearing directly upon the subject and actually written prior to this time are identified with certainty. It is sufficient to point out that this stream of philosophical chemistry followed the same course as that of the heretical religious doctrines of the Manichaeans, the Gnostics, and the Neoplatonists. For practical purposes, we may regard alchemy as part of the great heresy against which the Church thundered its anathemas.

Works considerably older than the alchemical writings are known dealing with physical chemistry, especially the compounding of medications, the making of alloys, and

the fusing of synthetic gems. A lead-glass composition called paste, used in making imitation stones of unusual brilliancy, was developed and became popular throughout the Roman Empire. Religious signets made of this paste, belonging to the Gnostics, the Chaldeans, and other philosophical communities, occur with considerable frequency. Such productions, however, or ancient writings relating to them cannot be said to be legitimate monuments of alchemy. It is possible that synthetic gems sometimes passed as genuine stones to the profit of the lapidary. He may have gained some reputation for cleverly imitating valuable metals and jewels, but such imposture has no direct bearing on the alchemical art.

If, as some students believe, alchemy was practiced in China at a slightly earlier period than its appearance in the West, it is possible that it reached North Africa from Eastern Asia. The Taoist priests indulged in philosophical speculations which paralleled closely the premises of the European mystic-chemists. The Chinese had their "esoteric drug" for the prolonging of human life. From their commentaries, however, it appears that this drug symbolized a state of consciousness by which Tao, or the Infinite Reality, was experienced or possessed inwardly. To become "one with Tao" was to rest in an eternal state beyond change or dissolution. Thus, to these Eastern mystics, alchemy was the science of Yoga, or union with the Divine. In a sense, this was also the burden of Neoplatonism.

The art of transmuting metals and the preparation of Universal Medicines were also cultivated, and professors of alchemy enjoyed imperial favor during the Tang dynasty. The "eight immortals" of Taoism were regarded as possessing the secrets of immortality, boundless wealth, and a variety of supernatural powers. After the rise of Buddhism in China, the alchemistical speculations of these Asiatics

included elements of Buddhist metaphysics. As always, the perfection of man himself was the principal end.

Dr. Obed Simon Johnson has noted that the Chinese have a record that in the year 166 A.D. an embassy, dispatched from Rome by the Emperor, Antoninus Marcus Aurelius, was received in China for the purpose of establishing a commerce between these nations. Dr. Johnson summarizes his conclusions thus: "The fact that these alchemical ideas first made their appearance in the West at some period 'from the 3rd to the 5th century' of this era is of particular interest. At that time Alexandria was still a mighty intellectual center, and even with the gradual decline of the Roman Empire, the city remained a commercial metropolis, second in importance only to Rome itself. A large portion of the Chinese trade, both by land and sea routes, passed through Alexandria. With the constantly increasing numbers of Oriental traders frequenting Alexandria, it is but natural that many ideas imported from the Orient should find congenial soil for growth in this center of culture and intellect. There seem to be no reasons why the alchemical ideas of China, already well-developed at the beginning of the Christian era, should not have reached Alexandria by the trade routes, to appear again after a certain transformation in Greek garb, and in an Occidental setting."\*

While a Sinologist may opine differently, it is equally possible that both China and India were indebted to North Africa for elements of their magical chemistries. Usually we find that structures of religious, moral, and ethical convictions date themselves, not only by their internal content but also by the way in which they develop their basic premises. The philosophy of alchemy is a direct and

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\*See *A Study of Chinese Alchemy* (Shanghai, 1928).



natural outgrowth of Plato's vision of the Philosophic Empire and the Philosopher-King. The possibility of a Universal Reformation of human institutions and the regeneration of man himself by the disciplines of wisdom revealed a larger and fuller purpose for mortal existence. At first, this vision was in the keeping of a few initiated idealists. Society as a whole was not inclined to such lofty speculations, but that small group endowed with larger capacities had discovered a sufficient reason for a long-range program of co-ordinated endeavor.

If alchemy found enthusiastic acceptance among the transcendentalists of North Africa, it was received with still greater satisfaction and acclaim by the philosophers and mystics of Arabia. Reaching the Arabs from Grecian sources, alchemy remained for a time in the Arabian desert, only to return to Europe in the refined and polished productions of Eastern romantic thinking. Thus, many of the celebrated texts of the alchemistical art are translations from the Persian and the Arabic.

After the collapse of the pagan Roman Empire and the rise of the Christian Church, the Near East became the asylum of the cultured and the informed. Europe was plunged into the chaos of the Dark Ages, but the caliphs of Bagdad continued to bestow their patronage upon scientists and scholars. During the reign of Harun-al-Rashid and his equally illustrious son, al-Mamun, the genuine writings of Plato and Aristotle were translated into the Arabian language. Works composed by Alexandrian intellectuals found especial favor among the Arabs. The principal alchemical texts appealed to the dramatic instincts of the Islamites, and experiments in gold making became a popular diversion. Needless to say, the sober texts of the Greek and Egyptian scholars were ornamented with garlands of Arabic overtones

and implications, until the most exact sciences took on the qualities of the *Arabian Nights' Entertainment*.

Among the illustrious adepts of the alchemical art who flourished among the Arabs should be mentioned Geber, Rhazes, Farabi (Alfarabi), and Avicenna. These men lived between the 8th and 11th centuries A.D., and belonged to what has been described as the "alchemic period" of Islamic culture. They contributed extensively to the foundations of Western chemical research, and were respected as distinguished experimentalists.

Francis Barrett refers to Geber as "the prince of those alchemical adepts who have appeared during the Christian era." The distinguished Belgian chemist, Jan Baptista van Helmont, speaks of this celebrated Arab as the oracle of medieval chemists, standing in the history of chemistry as Hippocrates stands in the history of medicine. Medieval bibliographers attributed nearly five hundred scientific, philosophical, and Hermetic tracts and treatises to Geber. He studied under several distinguished masters, and probably perfected his knowledge of alchemy, mysticism, and the occult arts after his initiation into the Sufi Order. Geber belongs in the direct descent of the Greek schools, which he may have contacted through Persian editors and compilers. Many tracts on esoteric subjects circulated under his name in Europe are spurious, but he was a man of extraordinary erudition and skilled in the preparation of elixirs, the perfection of metals, and the production of synthetic gems.

In his youth, Rhazes showed slight promise of distinction. He gained some prominence in music, but devoted most of his time to the luxury and dissipation for which his generation was famous. After his thirtieth year, he dedicated his life to medicine and philosophy, traveled extensively, and

gained practical experience as superintendent of the hospital at Bagdad. He interested the Prince of Khorassan in alchemical researches, but when the transmutation of metals was unsuccessful, the prince beat the physician over the head with a heavy alchemical book. It is reported that Rhazes became blind as the result of this violence. He left a number of writings which were used in the universities of Europe as late as the 17th century, and his works were consulted and frequently referred to by the great Avicenna. He died in poverty, having given most of his goods to the poor.

The life of Farabi has been embellished with numerous legends. He was of Turkish extraction, educated in Bagdad, where he studied the Greek philosophers, and was for a time the disciple of a Christian physician renowned for logic. Farabi traveled the greater part of his life, spent some time in Egypt, and made outstanding contributions to astronomy, mathematics, and music. He made a pilgrimage to Mecca, and was entertained in the court of the Sultan of Syria. He devoted his entire life to learning, and had the reputation for acquaintance with seventy languages and dialects. Some say that he died at the court of the Sultan, and others report that he was attacked and killed by robbers on one of his journeys. Farabi wrote of the Philosophers' Stone and other alchemical mysteries, and was considerably influenced by the teachings of the Neoplatonists.

Although Avicenna, like Paracelsus, was said to have lived an intemperate and erratic life, his genius has been accorded universal recognition. At an early age, he perfected his mind in mathematics, and then devoted himself to philosophy, psychology, and Neoplatonic transcendentalism. He had the courage to attempt a systematization of the categories of Aristotle, a project flavoring of audacity.



In his sixteenth year, Avicenna approached the study of medicine, and was fortunate enough to cure many influential persons, including members of the ruling house. He became grand vizier, but was more interested in his studies of the philosophic mercury and the *materia prima* of the Stone than the dreary concerns of public office.

Medieval European translations of Avicenna were standard texts in the universities and medical colleges. He had stature as a magician, and many *grimoires* and rituals of sorcery are attributed to him. The Arabs believed that the physician commanded a legion of spirits and was served by the Jinn. According to tradition, "as he sought the philosophic stone, several Oriental peoples affirm him to be still alive, dwelling in splendid state, invested with spiritual powers, and enjoying in an unknown retreat the sublime nectar of perpetual life and the rejuvenating qualities of the *aurum potabile*."\*

The alchemical tradition contains all the elements of a world program of enlightenment and reform. It requires only a superficial acquaintance with the philosophy and literature of alchemy in order to sense the magnitude of this concealed project. Had it been simply a science for the transmutation of metals, there would have been no need for the Masters of the art to depart from Christendom and to take refuge in Islam. Had these adepts been orthodox Christian chemists, they would scarcely have been received so hospitably by the Arabs. The very fact that the "Knights of the Golden Stone" found sanctuary in pagan communities still dominated by Hellenic scholarship should in itself reveal the truth of the matter.

For several centuries the Christian and pagan institutions were engaged in mortal conflict. In a curious way, Christian-

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\*See *The Lives of Alchemystical Philosophers* (London, 1888).

ity also was attempting to establish the Platonic Commonwealth. The pagans rejected the machinery of the Church, because they felt that it imposed unreasonable and unnatural restrictions upon the human mind, and that the clergy was resolved to dominate utterly the "new world order." The non-Christian communities functioned from the premise that only a truly enlightened man could administer himself and his world effectively. Enlightenment required self-discipline and a broad, deep program of education. The Christians were thinking in terms of a Priest-King ruling in glory by divine right. The pagans were thinking in terms of a Philosopher-King, a gentle and wise teacher ruling by the love and consent of the governed.

If we consider Nature as a sphere of instincts and impulses, then art becomes the method by which unorganized potential is integrated and directed. The pagans were not so much given to miracles as their Christian contemporaries. The Neoplatonists, for example, preferred to think of man accomplishing much with the help of God, rather than God accomplishing much with a little assistance grudgingly given by his children. If humankind longed for the paradise to come, it was up to them to earn a better state for themselves and for those who came after them. The only honorable way to earn was to grow. Growth alone, as the result of consecrated endeavor, proved to the gods that man deserved happiness and security.

The alchemical laboratory became the shrine of the spiritual sciences, taking the place of the ruined sanctuaries of the ancient Mysteries, which had been defiled by war, pillage, and the corruption of priesthoods. It was no longer possible to protect the physical houses of initiation. With the decline of the temporal power of pagan States, the hereditary descent of priestly offices became dangerous and

impractical. One by one the shrines were sought out and demolished, and legislation enacted to prevent their re-establishment. It became unsafe even to be suspected of addiction to classical philosophy. But wise men cannot be outwitted by stupid laws, and it would be foolish to assume that a structure of learning thousands of years old could be completely dissolved by a few unreasonable edicts.

The initiate-philosophers simply transferred their temples, shrines, sanctuaries, and palaces to a less tangible but equally real sphere of action. They rebuilt their Empire "along the shores of the air;" that is, on the plane of mind, substituting psychological association for physical Fraternities. Their enemies could not attack successfully these airy fortresses, and the old wisdom continued to permeate the social structure *from within*. The Mystery teaching emerged under a variety of symbols, emblems, and figures. It took up its abode in the very camp of its adversaries, gradually transmuting all other doctrines into the likeness of itself. It became the Universal Proteus, taking on all appearances at will, yet never revealing its own shape. This Invisible Empire was beyond the reach of the profane. Occasionally one of its citizens (initiates) was apprehended and destroyed, but another immediately filled the vacancy. The machinery of the Inquisition was set in motion against this Empire of the sages, but persecution only strengthened the resolution of these unknown philosophers.

Alchemy was one of the earliest appearances of the Mystery Schools in early Christian Europe. The contrivance was most adroit. It appealed to the ideals of the idealists, and to the avarice of the avaricious. It catered to the whims of princes, and to those dreams of inexhaustible wealth which have always intrigued the foolish. Later, when these alleged gold makers were solemnly pronounced insane, this



very cloak of madness served useful purposes. It was a medieval conviction that the insane were under the special protection of God, and to persecute them was contrary to the divine will. In fact, there are many instances in which the States, hoping to replenish their treasuries, supported colonies of philosophers in some luxury for years, allowing them privileges of assembly and freedom of conviction denied other groups.

The alchemistical tradition was largely restricted to the areas around Byzantium and the Eastern Mediterranean until the rise of Islamic culture in Spain in the 8th century. The Arabs brought with them a mass of scientific literature rooted in the Greek and Syrian cults. They placed special emphasis upon medicine and chemistry, and these led inevitably to philosophical speculation, especially where physical data was insufficient. Scholars of Western Europe, studying in the colleges of the Moors, translated most of the popular texts into the atrocious Latin of the period and distributed them widely among the universities and cloister schools. The resulting surge of mystical thinking did much to break up the crystallization that was threatening the survival of Western European education.

Alchemists drifted about Europe for centuries comparatively unmolested, except that every means was used to induce them to reveal their gold-making secrets. It was not even profitable to rack them too frequently, lest they die in the torture chamber and their priceless formulas be lost. Some, too boastful or imprudent, came to tragedy, but the majority was publicly ridiculed and privately cultivated. Even unbelievers, heretics, and Moslems were tolerated by the orthodox if there were some hope of future gain. In time, these alchemists drew about themselves strong groups of liberals, and fashioned an elaborate underground system

that eventually weakened the superstructures of ecclesiastical and political tryanny.

Albertus Magnus, who was canonized by Pope Pius XI in 1932, enumerated eight rules or conditions to be observed by those seeking the Philosophers' Stone. The alchemist should cultivate discretion and silence. He should reside in a private house in an isolated situation. He should select the time for his labors with discretion. He should practice patience, diligence, and perseverance. He should obey implicitly the rules of his science. He should use only vessels of glass or glazed earthenware. He should have sufficient means to bear the expenses of his researches, and he should carefully avoid association with princes or nobles.\* From these rules, it may be inferred that the chemist was engaged upon a program that required complete devotion, dedication, and freedom from outside interferences.

As the alchemical tradition unfolded, the devotees of the art fell into three distinct classes. The first group was made up of physical chemists, firmly convinced that the actual transmutation of metals was possible, thereby assuring worldly wealth. These gold makers took their art so seriously that one offered to finance the Crusades, and another volunteered to pay off the national debt of his country. George Ripley, a 15th-century alchemist, having discovered the Philosophers' Stone, contributed one hundred thousand pounds to the Knights of Rhodes, so that they could continue their war against the Turks. To prevent the upheaval which promiscuous transmutation might create in the monetary system, several governments, including England, enacted laws against the manufacture of artificial gold, except under the supervision of the officers of the mint.

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\*See *Libellus de Alchemia*.

The second group, composed of mystical chemists, raised its voice in protest against the gold makers, declaring alchemy to be a spiritual science of regeneration completely apart from all selfish, material interests. To these savants, transmutation was a Eucharistic Sacrament, and alchemy was a sacred art devoted to interpreting the mysteries of God through a cabala of chemical symbols and formulas. Boehme and Khunrath certainly held this opinion, and quotations from Roger Bacon and Basil Valentine support the same conviction.

The third group, philosophically inclined, attempted to unite these opposing concepts and to establish a common ground. The artists of this group reasoned thus: Nature is both spiritual and material. That which is true spiritually of invisible things must also by analogy be true physically of visible things. The physical transmutation of metals proves the possibility of the spiritual transmutation of man. Each in its own sphere justifies the other. If metals can be purified, man can be regenerated. Alchemy and chemistry are one art manifesting in two worlds—an inner world of divine mystery and an outer world of natural mystery.

Naturally, the motion of the Renaissance, sweeping across from Byzantium and touching, like the first rays of the rising sun, the great cities of Italy and France, brought with it the philosophy of alchemy. The obvious consequence of the Renaissance was the Protestant Reformation. Was not the Reformation a by-product of those Humanistic teachings which had kept alight the altar fires of the old Mysteries? The Reformation made possible the advancement of the arts and sciences and the liberation of the human mind from a sterile scholasticism. This liberation in its turn made possible the rise of modern democratic institutions and the restatement of the concepts of the Philosophic Empire. The



rights of man, long taught secretly, could now be publicly proclaimed.

Most men are too prone to think in terms of providence and accidents. Growth is one of those inevitable processes to be taken for granted. Actually the gradual release of the human mind from complete servitude to infallible dogmas was the result of tireless effort carried on secretly by groups well-aware of the importance of their task. Nothing happens by accident except disaster. All progress is by intent. We should hold in the highest regard and esteem those hidden powers behind the visible powers that change the world.

After the advent of Paracelsus, the outer form of the alchemical tradition passed through an important modification. The real purpose of the gold makers was gradually and cautiously revealed, although a certain amount of discretion was still necessary. The mysticism of alchemy—its cabalistic associations, its involvement in esoteric astrology, and its indebtedness to the learning of ancient peoples and distant countries—was allowed to become evident. The secret tradition in alchemy, with its divine science of human regeneration and redemption, was indicated through the enlarged and extended use of symbols and emblems. The spiritual mystery finally was so thinly veiled as to be almost immediately obvious. At the same time, several parallel groups, dedicated to the same ends but using different means, were merged to form the Confederation of Initiated Philosophers, which came into prominence in the opening years of the 17th century.

An ethical sphere was inserted between the worlds of God and Nature. This middle ground was human society. The institutions set up by men were in desperate need of transmutation. The foundations of alchemy shifted, and

the abstract symbolism was applied to the transformation of corrupt governments, thus preparing the way for the emergence of a democratic-socialized way of life. In time, the mystic-chemists became mystic-politicians. They bound themselves into a Secret Empire of Philosophic Reformers. Through them, magical, cabalistic, and transcendental lore was focused upon the practical task of the restoration of the golden age. This golden age was the symbol of the Philosophic Empire.

A remarkable book on philosophical alchemy, titled *A Suggestive Inquiry concerning the Hermetic Mystery and Alchemy, being an attempt to recover the Ancient Experiment of Nature*, was published anonymously in London in 1850. This work was almost immediately withdrawn from circulation, a circumstance giving rise to numerous speculations. The original edition of this book is now extremely rare. The truth of the matter seems to be that the authoress, a Mrs. Sarah Atwood, was closely related to a prominent Anglican clergyman, who suppressed the publication to prevent personal embarrassment. The book was later re-issued with biographical notes and other details.

*A Suggestive Inquiry* is probably the most valuable exposition of esoteric alchemy so far compiled. No one can peruse the text without becoming aware of the esoteric pattern underlying the operations of the mystical chemists. These old philosophers are revealed as sharing a body of secret learning best described as the science of sciences, or the "master key" to the operations of Nature under divine law.

Seven years after the appearance of Mrs. Atwood's *Inquiry*, an American author, General Ethan Allen Hitchcock, enlarging on a pamphlet issued two years earlier, published his *Remarks Upon Alchemy and the Alchemists*,

*etc.*, also anonymously. General Hitchcock, though working from a limited bibliography, proceeded thoughtfully and arrived at several relevant conclusions. He realized that the symbolical language of the chemical adepts indicated more than an accidental meeting of minds. For example: "There are many signs in alchemical volumes of a Secret Society, in which possibly the language used was conventionally determined. I have at times thought that some members of the Masonic fraternity might have found the secret language of the Alchemists a convenient mode of publishing, or rather of circulating among the initiated, doctrines of which they had taken 'an oath' not to speak directly, or to make known except to a brother. It is quite certain that books in a mysterious language were written by members of the Rosicrucian Society, who, I think it would be easy to show, had agreed to speak and write of each other before the uninitiated as sylphs, fairies, elfs, gnomes, and salamanders. The small volume under the title of the *Comte de Gabalis*, I am persuaded, was written by a Rosicrucian, and exhibits something of the manner by which the members of that fraternity approached strangers, and sounded them upon the subjects of becoming members."

General Hitchcock concludes his investigation with the following summary: "I have thus endeavored to show that Alchemy—the name of Hermetic Philosophers in the Middle Ages—was religious philosophy, or philosophic religion."

The philosophy of alchemy is concerned with the mystery of the *materia prima*, or the first matter of life. This first matter is the "chaos" of the Orphics—space itself—within which takes place the mystery of creation. Space is the infinite potential, and its social equivalent is the human collective. The races and nations of mankind, engaged in an endless striving, abide in an ethical privation equivalent



to chaos. As the Supreme Wisdom, which created all things, brought cosmos out of chaos by impressing upon the elements the pattern of universal law, so must the plan of the Philosophic Empire be revealed in the political sphere. Human society is then the base metal to be transmuted.

The great Masters of alchemy declared that the seeds of gold are present in all natural substances. Augmentation is the releasing of the universal energy in these seeds—not the creation of gold, but the growth of this precious metal. Growth is hastened by art. The tree of the philosophers, bearing its twelve kinds of fruit, is the “soul tree” of Jakob Boehme. This German mystic wrote that the seed of God is planted in the human heart. Nourished by holy aspiration, prayer, meditation, and the contemplation of the mysteries of the spirit, this seed grows miraculously, and its fruit feeds those who hunger and thirst after righteousness.

The artist is the master of the secret of natural growth. He uses no artificial means, for if he does the results cannot be permanent. He becomes a secretary over Nature, a guardian of the sleeping gold. He must preserve this treasure against the vandalism of men and the corruption of false doctrines. Like Vulcan and Prometheus, he guards the sacred flame that is necessary to work the metals. The philosophic fire is the same that burned in the adyta of ancient sanctuaries. The fire chemist is descended from the mighty smithy, Tubal-cain, the iron worker, who pounded swords into plowshares. He belonged to the clan of that cunning artisan “our father, Chiram,” who cast the golden implements for the Temple of Solomon the King.

The literature of alchemy forms in itself the material for a fascinating study. Unfortunately, little consideration has been given to this class of books and manuscripts. True enough, very few of the old scrolls and vellums were the

works of trained artists, although many show a measure of artistic ability. Their value lies principally in their extraordinary symbols and emblems. The recent research of Carl Jung indicates the psychological importance of the alchemistical writings and diagrams\*

The Keepers of the Lamp have kept their trust for more than fifteen centuries, and they were long, dark, dismal centuries. The day for a larger revelation has struck, and the time is approaching when the institutions dedicated to the ends of the Philosophic Empire can reappear in the objective world. It would be a mistake, however, to assume that the need for secrecy and caution has come to an end. The body of human society is still not strong enough to carry the full weight of its own regeneration. A broad program of educational reform must prepare the individual for his citizenship in the World Commonwealth. As long as tyranny in any of its forms and appearances remains, secret assemblies must continue. Noble purposes entrusted to the keeping of the unenlightened are rapidly perverted and fail of usefulness.

Today we think of alchemy as the "mad" mother of chemistry. We grudgingly acknowledge that to the old alchemists we are indebted for many choice secrets, remedies, and compounds. Actually, chemistry is older than alchemy, in the sense that it existed long before it became the medium for the perpetuation of the esoteric doctrines. Chemistry began in magic, unfolded in philosophy, and has finally emerged in the sober garb of science. Yet, without the keys reserved for the initiate, chemistry itself can never accomplish its true purpose. The undevout chemist, like the undevout astronomer, is mad. Until the restoration of the esoteric tradition, all the material arts and sciences

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\*See *Psychologie und Alchemie*.

are bodies without souls—physical ghosts in a spiritual universe.

### *The Alchemical Schools in Europe*

In his *Four Books Concerning the Secrets of the Adepts*, Johannes Weidenfeld explains that the goddess Diana, the Mother of Mysteries and the great deity of the Ephesians, represents the chemical-Hermetic Mystery. So that this Diana should not be exposed to the lust of insatiable gold makers and to the scorn and contempt of the ignorant, the adepts have covered her body with several sorts of garments. To this kind of apparel, antiquity has been pleased to apply the name of allegory. In this way, seeds of truth anciently received are concealed from the profane. This is according to the will and way of Hermes, the Thrice-Greatest, who was called the father of the adepts.

Art is a philosophical generation according to Nature, perfected by mind and will. The moon is the mother of generation. She conceives, impregnates, brings to birth, and nourishes the Sons of Wisdom, therefore, she is properly the *Mater Deorum*. Morianus tells us that the mystery of the generation of the adepts is concealed under the allegory of the generation of man himself, and of all creatures born in Nature that are brought to birth by the *Lunar Menstruum*.

The moon is the “old mother.” Thus the esoteric tradition itself was bestowed by the lunar ancestors, the Lords of the White Face. Diana is the nurse of the Mysteries—the nourisher—and to understand her hidden ways is to possess the secret of bringing to birth all that is conceived in time. The adept is the child of the sun and moon. He is born of fire and water. In him the Great Work is perfected. He is born in heaven, and generated in earth. He ascends



from the earth to a middle distance. He is the hero soul, conceived immaculately and ruling over all Nature with the serpent-wound rod of Hermes.

The European school of Hermetic adepts, illuminates, and initiates developed according to a well-defined pattern. The dimensions of the alchemical program can be traced through the literature of the 16th and 17th centuries deal-



—From *Subtilis Allegoria, etc.*, by Michael Maier

#### THE ANONYMOUS ADEPT

In his *Symbola Aureae Mensae*, Maier uses the figure of an unnamed adept to represent all those Masters of the Great Work whose identities have been concealed by intent or by the lapse of time. The nameless Master stands at the left, pointing to the crippled figure of time, who is the ancient gardener in the symbolical orchard of alchemy.

ing with the mysteries of esoteric chemistry. Most of the books were not written by the adepts themselves, but by their initiated disciples or by those seeking acceptance in the Secret Schools. Many of these books are remarkable for the profundity of their contents and for the symbolical figures which illustrate them, but we must limit our present inquiry to those parts which unfold or sustain the adept tradition.

The best alchemical writers agree that scattered about England, Europe, and the Near East were men divinely enlightened in the mysteries of the transmutation of metals, the preparation of the Universal Medicine, and the compounding of the Philosophers' Stone. The most advanced and proficient of these spiritual alchemists were properly termed adepts. They lived secluded lives, and in only a few instances have their real names been reported. Some of these adepts, especially in the Near East, had fixed places of residence, but most of them wandered from town to town and country to country, instructing such as they found worthy to receive the priceless arcanum. Some of these extraordinary men attained to great age without infirmity, and their lives have become the subject of extravagant fiction.

These higher initiates changed their names as they journeyed, and in a variety of ways confused and outwitted such as tried to trace their movements. They adapted their minds to local conditions, assumed the clothing, manners, and even languages of the communities through which they journeyed. They always gave the appearance of humility and gentleness, passing easily for merchants or scholars, sometimes even for doctors or the religious. All were bound together by one inflexible rule: Each must seek an appropriately-qualified person to whom, before death, he could confide the esoteric secrets of philosophy. If no such disciple could be found, the arcanum died with the Master.

In their writings, many of the struggling alchemists claimed to have contacted one or more of the Hermetic adepts. After numerous disappointments due to the false or incomplete formulas available in the writings of the alchemical philosophers, a true Master would appear to the faithful novice. The meeting was regarded as an act

of providence made possible by the infinite wisdom and mercy of God. Sometimes the adept bestowed priceless chemical secrets, but more often the disciple received only a small amount of the mysterious "powder of projection" which was called the Red Lion. If the grateful adept for some reason gave the transmuting agent without revealing the method of its production, confusion and disaster nearly always followed the gift.

The recipient was severely tested and all too often succumbed to the pressure of environment. He transmuted base metals to enlarge his fortune, thus focusing upon himself a dangerous kind of fame. For a time he amazed his friends, enraged his enemies, and impressed powerful and influential persons. But when his supply of the mysterious powder was exhausted, he had no way of replenishing this precious substance. Disgrace, imprisonment, and death were likely to be the lot of the pretender. Lacking the power or skill to discover the formula of the Red Lion, the alchemist was driven to charlatanism and pretension to maintain his physical dignities and estates.

Avaricious gold makers used every means conceivable to discover the secrets of the adepts. Wholesale bribery was resorted to, and those whose avidity knew no bounds even married the widows of suspected adepts in the hope of thus securing the secret.

The mysterious adept usually appeared without warning to some struggling chemist whose sincerity seemed admirable. No charge was ever made for the instructions, but the recipient was obligated by oath to preserve his new knowledge from the profane even at the cost of his own life. Some of the chemists were privileged to secure assistance early in their work. Others, like Bernard Trévisan (1406-1490), struggled with false formulas for fifty or sixty years before the true secrets were communicated to them.



At one time it was fashionable for alchemists to advertise their requirements, usually in the form of short tracts which were circulated in the hope that they would reach the eye of a Hermetic initiate. These tracts told in veiled language the progress that the chemists had made, and indicated the nature of the present difficulty. Such tracts usually had little merit in themselves, but are interesting mementos of the prevailing temper.

Take the case of Thomas Charnock, who was born in 1524. This man had no formal education, but had trained himself in astronomy and philosophy. One day while Charnock was visiting an inn, he met a small boy leading a blind old man. Recognizing from the ancient one's conversation that he had some knowledge of chemistry, Charnock waited until the other guests had retired and then begged the old man to instruct him. The adept, for such he was, replied that he could not, as his teachings were reserved for a certain Thomas Charnock, for whom he was then searching. After Charnock had revealed his identity, the old man bound him with a promise that he would never use the secret of the gold for personal gain or advancement, but should communicate it before his death to a prepared disciple. The two men then retired to a nearby vacant field where no one could approach unseen, and conversed together for nine days. Such incidents are frequent in the alchemical tradition.

If means and facilities permitted, alchemists traveled extensively in search of the elusive adepts. As legends spread indicating the abodes of reputed Masters, many an enthusiast wasted his worldly goods pursuing shadows. At that time, the Near East abounded in chemists and savants of obscure sciences. Several famous alchemists, including Paracelsus, claimed to have received the final secrets of the Great Work in Constantinople or Arabia.

The Hermetic Institute of Medicine for  
 immutation to any person living—  
 no but a single year unless the  
 person is an Initiate and received  
 Member and Brother of the Rosy Cross.

To keep faithfully the above articles  
 is I now receive them from a worthy  
 Member of our Society as he received  
 them himself. I willingly agree and  
 sign this with my name and give my  
 Seal to the same. So helping God,  
 Amen.

J. Bacstrom R.C.

I have initiated and received Mr.  
 Phileas B. B. Doctor of Physic  
 as a practical Member and Brother  
 shall an apprentice in consequence of  
 himself receiving which I certify by  
 my name and Seal.

At New York 12<sup>th</sup> Sept. 1794

du Chazal F.R.C.



The Seal of the Red Stone

—From a copy of the last page of the Bacstrom Rosicrucian diploma.

Dr. Bacstrom signed the articles of the Society,  
 and it was certified by the Comte du Chazal, F.R.C.

Most of the Hermetic adepts carried certain credentials  
 by which they could identify themselves when need arose.

These were exhibited only to such as were qualified to demand proof. Sometimes the adept bestowed some formal document upon his selected disciple as evidence of initiation. It is interesting that such documents are seldom if ever found on the bodies of the adepts or among the possessions of their disciples. Evidently these diplomas were held in the highest esteem and were destroyed before they could fall into the hands of the profane.

An example of these diplomas will indicate the obscurity which invariably surrounds documents of this kind. Dr. Sigismund Bacstrom, a distinguished student of alchemy, was initiated into a Society of Rosicrucians on the Island of Mauritius, September 12, 1794, by a mysterious adept who used the name Comte du Chazal. Bacstrom received a certificate signed by du Chazal, but the original document, if it has survived, cannot be found. Copies were made, however, and two are mentioned by A. E. Waite in his *Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross*. Frederick Hockley, a dilettante in matters esoteric who gathered many curious fragments, left a version of this certificate among his papers. The source of his transcript is unknown. A magazine, *The Rosicrucian and Masonic Record*, for October 1876, reprinted Hockley's copy, but has very little to say about the source of the certificate. It is doubtful if the full facts will ever be known.

It is also difficult to divide genuine credentials from the spurious sheepskins which were issued in huge quantities by impostors and charlatans. These elaborate but worthless vellums were manufactured as need arose, and were ornamented with a conglomeration of emblems, characters, symbols, high-flown phrases, and fraudulent signatures of miscellaneous Grand Masters, hierophants, imperators, and the like. Certificates are worthless unless the circumstances under which they were granted or the persons giving or re-



ceiving them are known to have possessed authority and integrity.

In a rare and curious manuscript written about the year 1800, entitled *Veritables Adeptes, Illuminés et Initiés de l'Hermetisme*, the anonymous author compiled a list of the true Hermetic sages, and each name is accompanied by a term designating the honors to which the Master had attained. As far as we have been able to learn, this roster is unique and merits careful consideration.

Those who are devoted to the esoteric sciences are properly called sages, meaning *eminent in wisdom*. *L'Escalier des sages* (the ladder of the sages) is a symbol of the degrees of initiation from that of novice to that of adept. Our unknown writer thus defines the terms which he applies to the three higher rungs of the Hermetic ladder: "I call an Adept the man who has made the Great Work because he knows and he has seen. The illumined one knows and has seen the marvels of the Light but it has not been necessary for him to do the Great Work. The initiate has not done the Great Work but knows the secret of it; he has not seen the Light, but he knows the secret of it; and he can very aptly (or justly) talk of both the Light and the Great Work. There are many false initiates who impose themselves upon the credulity of amateurs. The true sages are in small number. There are more initiates than truly illumined ones; as to the Adepts, they are very rare."

The adepts listed include Moses, Solomon, Hermes, Democritus, Albertus Magnus, Raymond Lully, George Ripley, Nicholas Flamel, and Alexander Sethon. In the list of illumines are such names as St. John the Apostle, Plotinus, Henry Khunrath, Jakob Boehme, and John Dautin. Khunrath reached the sixth degree of the Hermetic School, but did not accomplish adeptship. Among the

initiates are Homer, Hesiod, Apuleius, Virgil, Thomas Aquinas, Roger Bacon, Michael Maier, Robert Fludd, and John Dee.

The title of spagyrist is used to distinguish those Masters of philosophical alchemy whose researches were dedicated to chemical medicine, such as Paracelsus, Isaac of Holland, Basil Valentine, and the two brothers Vaughan. In addition to those named, several others are identified only by anonymous works attributed to them.

The phantom adept, Elias Artista, is mentioned. He is the Master of the Mysteries, the "one who is to come." To this Elias, a number of rare tracts are attributed, and he is mentioned with caution in several printed works, which we will examine later.

These adepts are the links of the Golden Chain of Homer, the true Knights of the Golden Stone. They are the Argonauts seeking the Golden Fleece. They are the door-keepers of the palace of Semiramis, the mythical Queen of Babylon.

It is impossible to trace exoterically the descent of the alchemical tradition through the body of its adepts. These men used every means in their power to obscure their identities and their activities. There can be no doubt that they were bound together and had knowledge of each other, but there is no indication that any group of them ever assembled to form a lasting physical Fraternity or Organization. Each told the same story: in effect, that the secrets had descended to them through a long line of initiates from the remote past. Their method of operation was dictated by the times in which they lived, and the changing temper of European civilization played an important part in the dying out of the alchemical tradition.

The 18th century ushered in a period of revolution and social change. The popular fancy shifted from abstract scientific speculation to the imminent problems of political reform. The old Secret Societies retired to those cloud-capped towers referred to in their writings. It became ever more difficult for the Hermetic adepts to discover suitable successors. Chemistry took on the complexion of a materialistic science of physical research and experimentation. By the beginning of the 19th century, the alchemical tradition was represented by only a handful of philosophic chemists.

### *Roger Bacon*

It is not without just cause that Roger Bacon was honored with the title *Doctor Mirabilis*. He is generally acknowledged to have been the first Englishman who cultivated alchemical philosophy. It is difficult to estimate the scope of Bacon's addiction to the Hermetic arts of antiquity. According to Franciscus Picus, Roger Bacon, in his *Book of the Six Sciences*, describes the means by which prophetic powers can be induced through the use of a mirror called *Almuchefi*, composed in accordance to the laws of perspective under the influence of a benign constellation, and after the body of the individual has been modified by alchemy. In view of Bacon's frequent references to "spiritual experience" as distinguished from "experience of the senses," we may be justified in affirming that he favored the doctrines of the Alexandrian Neoplatonists.

The historians of 13th-century England were few and inadequate. Contemporary accounts of the life of Roger Bacon leave much to be desired. There is more of legend than of sober fact in the reports generally circulated about this extraordinary man. He was born near Ilchester in



Somerset (circa A.D. 1214), and lived to the age of about eighty years. It would seem that he came from a family of considerable means, and invested his entire patrimony in books and scientific instruments. G. G. Coulton estimates that the money so expended by Bacon would have a present value of at least ninety thousand dollars.\*

Roger was well-educated, according to the facilities of his time. At thirteen he entered Oxford where he attained his Master of Arts. His early age does not necessarily imply precocity, as it was usual for young men to reach the university in their middle teens. Fired with the hope for higher learning, he went to Paris where he studied under eminent but blundering pedagogues, and also received a Master of Arts at the Sorbonne. Thus equipped with an impressive but comparatively sterile scholasticism, Bacon was qualified to perpetuate the opinionism of the higher schools. As a lecturer in the university, Bacon decided to reform the entire sphere of learning and the faculty of the Sorbonne. In the words of Edward Lutz: "He spared neither himself nor them, freely pouring out his energy and his scorn."†

Bacon never made any effort to endear himself to the entrenched educators of the university. He walked out of their classes while a student, and attacked them bitterly as a graduate. It was reported that he was in considerable esteem with the student body, a state of affairs also quite understandable. While still in his twenties, Bacon wrote several books, including one on metaphysics that indicated the direction of his thinking if not the maturity of his genius. Throughout his career, he leaned heavily upon internal inspiration as a source of general truths, and upon the mental faculties for censorship and order and the

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\*See *Medieval Garner* (London, 1910).

†See *Roger Bacon's Contribution to Knowledge* (New York, 1936).

application of knowledge to the requirements of human life.

At a time when mental horizons were extremely narrow, the breadth of Bacon's vision requires some reasonable explanation. The means he used to assemble the information which he required paralleled closely the methods of the illustrious Paracelsus. Bacon recognized no man-made limitations or boundaries in his search for truth. He visited



—From *A True & Faithful Revelation*, etc.

ROGER BACON

prominent scholars, listened to the reports of travelers and adventurers, and interviewed representatives of every social class. He mingled with farmers, housewives, journeymen, and even magicians, sorcerers, and astrologers. In many cases, his acquaintanceships damaged his reputation but enlarged his knowledge.

From tradition, Bacon gained much, and he did not hesitate to explore pagan and heathen sources. He realized

that all races and nations had produced wise men, and that the search for truth was eternal and universal. He gained considerable proficiency in the learning of the Arabs and the Jews, and was well-equipped to estimate the works of the Greek and Latin philosophers. In languages, he mastered not only the classical tongues but also Aramaic and Arabic. In mathematics, he followed Pythagoras, Euclid, and Ptolemy. He gave much thought to geography, and made important reforms and innovations in liturgical music. Though not a physician, he contributed much to the profession of medicine, and his experiments with the microscope were revolutionary. It is said that Bacon's interest in alchemy was largely to advance the science of chemistry, and his inclination to astrology was inspired by a desire to reform the calendar. It is difficult to reconcile the miserable condition of 13th-century learning in general with Bacon's contributions in zoology, embryology, histology, and optics.

Among important inventions associated with his name are the microscope, the telescope, the thermometer, and gunpowder. In all probability, he gained some of his basic ideas from lesser-known contemporaries, but he had the wit and the skill to advance and to perfect concepts previously incomplete. Naturally, it was necessary for him to break with the rigid scholastic pattern which held the medieval mind in bondage to authority. In all things, he advocated experience and experiment, thus anticipating by several centuries the modern temper.

The circumstances which induced Roger Bacon to join the Franciscan Order are not entirely clear, nor is the exact date at which he entered the Brotherhood of St. Francis recorded. Professor Newbold, who devoted so many years to the study of Roger Bacon's cipher manuscripts, suggests 1256 or 1257 as the most probable year.\*

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\*See *The Cipher of Roger Bacon* (Philadelphia and London, 1928).



This would mean that Bacon had reached his early forties. Possibly Roger was influenced by the fact that several scholars whom he especially respected were Franciscans. Also, he may have felt that the calm of the cloister would give him the leisure to pursue his researches. It is difficult to imagine that a man of his interests, which included even Gnosticism and the cabala, could have been in complete accord with the Franciscan program. There are evidences, however, that he did not share the mystical ideals and convictions of the Franciscan founder, and, like St. Francis, may have imbibed principles from the secret doctrines of the Albigensian Troubadours.

Although Bacon's contributions to human progress are now generously acknowledged, he did not fair so well in his own day. If it was a misfortune to differ with the schoolmen, it was a tragedy to cross purposes with the Church. Today it would appear ridiculous for anyone to be accused of advocating "novelties," yet this is the charge that was brought against Friar Bacon. The precise nature of the novelties is a matter of some dispute. Even though Bacon's interests were not entirely orthodox, they were consistent in general with the interests of the times. Most intellectuals pretended to be conversant with the conflicting mass of ancient traditions and doctrines. Even alchemy and astrology were practiced by the members of monkish Orders, and not a few old abbots were suspected of sorcery. Such pursuits were regarded with disfavor, and appropriate chidings administered. It took something more, however, to set the whole machinery of theological displeasure in motion.

The crux of the trouble may well have been Bacon's direct attack upon the sapience of several distinguished clerics among the Dominicans and Franciscans. Then, as now, it was dangerous to attack honored names. As a member

of a religious Order, Bacon came under the displeasure and, to a degree, under the temporal power of prominent Churchmen. These, gathering their resources, resolved to quell the ardor of the "Oxford upstart." The Bishop of Paris decided to cleanse the air of novelties, so he invoked the rule of censorship which required that the writings of the religious be approved by the Church before publication. About this time, an anonymous work appeared which attacked the very foundations of such censorship. Though unsigned, this vibrant criticism bore the stamp of Bacon's genius, and invited immediate reprisals. Although Bacon had powerful friends and supporters, his writings were condemned and he was imprisoned for fifteen years.

In this way, the novelties resulted in "salutary penance." The wording was more gentle than the method, and Friar Bacon had himself and his ideas "withheld from an unappreciative world" for fifteen years. We have no record that Roger was seriously mistreated, although his diet is reported to have been limited to bread and water for a considerable period. He lost weight but not zeal, and it is believed that during this time he incorporated many of his choicest discoveries in the curious ciphers which discouraged Father Kircher, but which were finally decoded by Professor Newbold.

Most of Bacon's scientific work seems to have been done prior to his involvement in the Franciscan-Dominican controversy. He enjoyed the friendship of Clement IV, and submitted several manuscripts for the consideration of this Pope. Possibly it was fortunate that Clement had no opportunity to peruse these writings, for they contained material which might have proved disastrous to their author. Clement died in 1268, and Bacon lost his greatest source of security. The long years of imprisonment must

have weighed heavily indeed upon the aging friar. Devoted to study, he was deprived of those instruments and means nearest to his heart. He was released in 1292, and although he began immediately an important work on theology, he died before the project could be matured. Like Confucius, Friar Bacon departed from this life convinced that he had failed in his self-appointed mission. It is reported that on his deathbed he said: "I repent of having given myself so much trouble to destroy ignorance."

The place of Roger Bacon in the descent of the Mysteries in the Christian world is sustained largely by his alchemical writings. In these, he revealed beyond doubt that he possessed the true key to the Great Work. He is mentioned frequently and with high esteem by later alchemists and, according to Gabriel Naude, an admirable defense of Roger was written by Dr. John Dee.\* The cipher manuscripts decoded by Professor Newbold remove any possible doubt about Roger Bacon's religious and philosophical accomplishments. After six hundred years, the work of this great man is revealed to the world.

The alchemistical adepts of the 17th-century restoration of the Hermetic arts not only acknowledged Roger Bacon to be one of their earliest Masters, but did not hesitate to include him also among the adepts of the Great Schools. The anonymous author of the *Veritables Adeptes, etc.* included Roger Bacon among the initiates with Michael Maier, Robert Fludd, and John Dee.

In addition to the genuine works of Roger Bacon, a number of tracts and treatises attributed to him appeared during the great alchemical revival. *The Famous History of Friar Bacon, etc.*, which passed through many printings, is a spurious production, centered in the legend that Bacon, like St. Thomas Aquinas, invented a talking head of brass.

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\*See *The History of Magic* (London, 1657).



This head only spoke three times, its words being: "Time is. Time was. Time has passed." After these cryptic remarks, the brazen head fell to pieces with great noise and commotion.

In summarizing the character and career of Roger Bacon, it must be evident that he was not an isolated phenomenon. Every interest of his life, every source of his inspiration, every concept he defended belonged to the Mystery Schools. While he did not personally acknowledge his association with heretical sects, he preached their gospel of the right of man to think, to learn, and to grow according to the dictates of his own conscience. His life was dedicated to the enlargement of the human empire—the victory of man over the limitations imposed by ignorance. His researches and writings are permeated with Pythagoreanism, Platonism, Neoplatonism, Gnosticism, and the heresy of Manes. Through him, an ageless stream of wisdom was partly revealed to a world dominated by scholastic theology. His disclosure of principles, laws, and instruments already known to Esoteric Fraternities was premature. He was born before his time, but the influence of his teachings, joined with that of other initiated philosophers, prepared the way for the Universal Reformation. It is remarkable that two men, both with the same surname—Roger Bacon and Francis Bacon—should stand forth as universally enlightened citizens of the Philosophic Empire.

### *Raymond Lully*

The *doctor illuminatus*, Raymond Lully, gained a wide reputation in Catalonia, and is honored to this day by the Majorcans, among whom his doctrines still have a considerable following. He was a man of unusual attainments in literature, poetry, philosophy, religion, mysticism, sociology, linguistics, and the sciences. Popularly venerated as a

saint, he attempted single-handed a broad missionary program against Mohammedanism, and was stoned to death outside the city walls of Bougie, in Northern Algeria. Although Lully exposed himself to the vengeance of the infidels with fanatical zeal and was frequently imprisoned, he was nearly eighty years of age at the time of his death. He would almost certainly have been beatified and probably canonized had he not come under the disfavor of the powerful Dominican Order. His doctrines also had influential support, however, and his reputation was stoutly defended by the Jesuits.

Raymond Lully was born on the island of Majorca about the year 1235. He came from an old and noble Catalonian family, and during his youth devoted himself almost entirely to the pleasures of court life. He acquired high favor with the king and was installed as Seneschal of the Isles. Although Lully had a ready mind, his family despaired of restraining his tempestuous disposition, and allowed him to follow his father's profession of gentleman-soldiering. The young courtier married early, but his disposition was deficient in fidelity, and his extramarital associations gained for him considerable notoriety. When already the father of three children, he conceived a *grande passion* for Signora Ambrosia Eleonora de Castello de Genes. This charming and accomplished lady, herself happily married, was deeply embarrassed by Lully's unsolicited attentions. After several unpleasant episodes, she took counsel with her husband to end the situation without unnecessary distress to her persistent admirer.

With the consent of her husband and in his presence, Signora Ambrosia wrote a letter to Lully beseeching him not to tarnish his reputation by devoting himself to a hopeless passion and warning him that a terrible disillusionment would result if he pressed his affections any further. The

letter had no effect, and finally the lady summoned young Raymond to her house. "Look on what thou lovest, Raymond Lully," she cried, with tears in her eyes. Then tearing open her dress, she showed her breast almost entirely eaten away by cancer. Lully was completely overcome, and, falling on his knees, begged forgiveness for his conduct. This experience transformed his entire life. He renounced his dissipated and dissolute existence, and, casting himself at the foot of a crucifix, dedicated his life to the service of God.

Lully gave up his office at court, renounced the world, and divided the larger part of his estate among his family, reserving only enough for the absolute necessities of life. He also distributed his goods generously among the poor. During this same period, he received several visions of Christ which consoled him through desperate illness and misfortune. Convinced by mystical experiences that he had been selected to enlighten mankind, he traveled extensively, studied diligently, and for several years served as a professor of the Arabic language in the Franciscan monastery at Miramar. Driven by relentless pressures within himself, he resolved to attempt the conversion of the Mohammedans. He visited Rome to exhort the Pope to establish monasteries for the education of missionary friars. Honorius IV, who might have furthered this program, died just as Lully reached Rome, and the project received no immediate attention.

Like St. Augustine, whose repentancies are proverbial, Lully struggled incessantly with real or imaginary defects of his own character. He journeyed to Tunis, where his fiery zeal against Islamism caused him to be arrested, cast into prison, and condemned to death for seducing the people. He was saved by one of the learned Islamites whom he was attempting to convert. On another occasion in



Algiers, the authorities, exasperated by Lully's preachings, put a bridle in his mouth depriving him of speech for forty days, then beat him roundly and expelled him from the kingdom.



—From an early woodblock

#### THE MARTYRDOM OF RAYMOND LULLY

The remaining years of Lully's life were mostly devoted to his missionary activities among the Mohammedans and

the inevitable retaliations which he brought upon himself. At last his earthly journey ended under the walls of Bougie. According to one account, merchants passing Tunis saw a strange light hovering over the ground. Going ashore in a small boat, they found that this light came from a heap of stones which had been hastily piled over Lully's body. A more-sober account says that these merchants found Lully in a dying condition and carried him to their ship, and that he died on board the 29th of June 1315, in sight of the island of Majorca.

The life of Lully and the preoccupations of his mind do not appear to substantiate the reputation for alchemical learning later associated with his name. He is said to have been a voluminous writer. Various authorities make him the author of from five hundred to several thousand treatises. Such a literary output seems incredible when we consider his missionary career. There is little in common between Lully, the ardent apostle unto the gentiles, and Lully, whom Eliphas Levi describes as "a grand and sublime adept of the Hermetic science." There is a report that Lully was a disciple of the initiated chemist-philosopher, Arnaldus de Villa Nova, and that he also had the acquaintance of John Cremer, the phantom abbot of Westminster. Neither of these associations has been satisfactorily established.

John Cremer presents especial difficulties. This saintly servant of the Philosophers' Stone is represented in the *Musaeum Hermeticum* (Frankfort, 1678) by a short and spirited tract, titled *Testamentum Cremeri*. There is a vignette portrait of the abbot on the title page, which could be a reasonable likeness of almost anyone. Incidentally, the identical vignette ornaments the title page of an earlier work published by Luca Jennis in 1625. This is entitled *The Philosophers' Stone, a Beautiful Article by a German*



*Philosopher in the year 1423.* The work is signed H.C.D., the initials standing for Hermannus Condesyanus, Doctor. Thus, the reverend abbot of Westminster has no claim on his own supposed portrait.

A charming biography has been manufactured for Abbot Cremer. He was given apartments in the Tower of London, where he manufactured gold to the sum of eighteen million pounds sterling. Lully is supposed to have been the guest of Cremer in the abbey of Westminster, although it is extremely doubtful if the Majorcan mystic ever visited England. Of course, no John Cremer was ever abbot of Westminster at any period in the history of the abbey. It is interesting that we are indebted to Count Michael Maier, the Rosicrucian apologist, for the publication of Cremer's *Testament*, which appeared in Maier's *Tripus Aureus* in 1618.

As may be expected, the works attributed to Lully relating to the Hermetic and alchemistic arts were published between 1596 and 1670. There are earlier editions of his religious and scientific writings, but such as have a fair claim to authenticity may be described as conservative. Lully emerges as a patron saint of the fire chemists with other names rescued from distinguished desuetude by the moving spirits behind the 17th-century Reformation.

There is some ground, however, for including Raymond Lully in the descent of the esoteric tradition. In 1283 he wrote *Blanquerna*, a mystical or philosophical fiction belonging to the order of Utopias. This work shows acquaintance with the Platonic concept of the Philosophic Empire, and anticipated by three hundred years the Utopian Cycle beginning with Sir Thomas More and ending with Sir Francis Bacon. By his poems and literary works, Lully may be entitled to inclusion in the descent of the Troubadours,



and he is known to have had some acquaintance with the teachings of the Spanish cabalists.

Several writers, who will probably never be indentified, used Lully's name to advance tracts of a much later date; and confronted with this confusion, some historians have taken refuge in the old and convenient device that the works of two or more men of the same name have been jumbled together. Perhaps the later alchemists were as skillful in transmuting old authors and their writings as they were in digesting and augmenting their mineral compounds. Lully is a good example of the "methods of convenience" practiced in such German literary workshops of Esoteric Fraternities as the one in Frankfort, presided over by Luca Jennis and Theodore de Bry. Without such sympathetic and obliging printers and engravers, the program for the universal regeneration of human society would have been seriously impaired.

#### *Nicholas Flamel.*

Nothing is known of the early life of Nicholas Flamel (born circa 1330), scrivener and notary, except that he was born of poor but honest parents, and lived on the Street of the Notaries near the chapel of St. James of the Bouchery, in Paris. His fame began in the year 1357 when he purchased for two florins (at least so he says) a large, gilded book very old and curious. The cover of the strange volume was of brass, engraved with letters and figures, and the inside consisted of thin leaves of bark, or delicate rinds of young trees. Each leaf was covered with writing and symbols, beautifully executed and brilliantly colored. Upon the first page was written in great capital letters of gold *Abraham the Jew, Prince, Priest, Levite, Astrologer, and Philosopher, to the Nation of the Jews, by the Wrath of God dispersed among the Gauls, sendeth Health.* It should be

noted that the materials used were entirely inconsistent with European fashions, and indicate the possibility of Eastern origin.

The burden of the *Book of Abraham the Jew* was as remarkable as its appearance. It seems that after the Diaspora (the scattering of Israel) the Jewish people became wanderers, and took up their dwellings in unfriendly Gentile nations. Here they were subjected to heavy taxation, and were required to "contribute" generously,



—From *Les Figures Hieroglyphiques*  
of Nicolas Flamel, etc. (Paris, 1612)

#### NICHOLAS FLAMEL AND HIS WIFE

These portraits were included among the figures placed in the churchyard of the Innocents. Of them, Flamel writes: "The man painted here doth expressly resemble myself to the natural, as the woman doth lively figure Perrenelle."

if reluctantly, to treasuries of avaricious princes. These misfortunes weighed so heavily upon them that one of their learned men, Abraham the Jew, an alchemist and a cabalist, perfected the means of transmuting base metals into gold. He gave the secret to his people in order that they might create vast stores of wealth with which to meet their taxes.

Flamel and his wife devoted many years and much effort to the *Book of Abraham the Jew*, and on the 25th day of April 1382, at five o'clock in the evening they accomplished the transmutation of base metal into pure

gold. These pious folks devoted the riches resulting from numerous transmutations entirely to charity and religion.

If Flamel had been the only one to record this extraordinary manuscript, the whole account might be regarded as a fable or invention, but the elusive volume made at least one other public appearance. Robert H. Fryar, writing in 1865, notes: "One thing which seems to prove the reality of this story beyond dispute, is, that this very *Book of Abraham the Jew* with the annotations of 'Flammel'.....was actually in the hands of Cardinal Richelieu, as Borel was told by the Count de Cabrines, who saw and examined it."\*

Arthur Edward Waite further complicates the story of Flamel with a curious account. He tells that prior to securing the *Book of Abraham the Jew*, Flamel was privileged to enjoy a strange vision. A being of the spirit world, by name Bath-Kol, appeared to him in the guise of an angel, bearing in his hand a strange book bound in brass, written upon bark, and graven with an iron pen. "Flamel!" cried the radiant apparition. "Behold this book of which thou understandest nothing; to many others but thyself it would remain forever unintelligible, but one day thou shalt discern in its pages what none but thyself shall see." In his vision Flamel eagerly stretched out his hand to take the precious gift, but the angel and the book disappeared in a tide of light. We can well imagine the joy of the scrivener when later the book he had seen in his vision came into his possession.†

Such is the story that has descended through the alchemical tradition, but there is something else to be added. So remarkable is this epilogue that we must give attention to the persons, the places, and the circumstances involved.

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\*See *Flammel's Book, etc.* (Bath reprint, footnote).

†See *Lives of Alchemystical Philosophers*.



Sieur Paul Lucas was commissioned by Louis XIV of France to travel through Greece, Asia Minor, Macedonia, and Africa in search of antiquities. When he returned he published an account of his journey under the title *Voyage de sieur Paul Lucas, par ordre du Roi dans la Crece, etc.*, (Amsterdam, 1714), and dedicated the book to his majesty. Louis XIV was not the type of man to be patient if his favors were abused, and Lucas would not have retained the royal favor had he published fables in the name of a sober narrative. A digest of the relevant sections of Lucas' story is as follows:

While journeying in Natolia, he came to a small mosque. In this little cloister were four dervishes, persons of the greatest worth and learning. Lucas was received with all imaginable civility and invited to share their food. One of them who said he was of the country of the Uzbeks, a tribe of Tatars, was the most learned. "And I believe verily he spoke all the languages in the world."

After they had conversed for a time in Turkish, the dervish asked if Lucas could speak Latin, Spanish, or Italian. Lucas suggested Italian, but the holy man soon discovered that this was not the native language of his guest. He then frankly inquired, and the traveler told him that he was a native of France. The dervish then spoke in good French as if he had been brought up in Paris.

After some conversation, the dervish confided to Lucas that he was one of the sages who had retired to a quiet place for study and meditation. He seemed to be a man about thirty years old, but by his discourses and the accounts of his long journeys he had made, it appeared that he must have lived at least a century.

This sage said that he was one of the seven friends who wandered up and down the world to perfect themselves

and their studies. When parting, they always appointed another meeting at the end of twenty years. When this time came, those who arrived early waited for the rest. The little mosque was the one decided upon for the present gathering.

The conversation ran over an abundance of curious topics. Religion and natural philosophy were discussed, then chemistry, alchemy, and the cabala. A sage, explained the dervish, is that kind of a man to whom the title of philosopher naturally belongs. He has no sort of tie to the world; he sees all things die and revive without concern; he has more riches in his power than the greatest of kings, but he tramples them under his feet, and this generous contempt sets him ever in the midst of indigence above the power of events.

The wise man, though he must die, does not leave this world before the utmost time fixed, and a sage may live nearly a thousand years. The Philosopher's Stone is not a chimera. Then the name of Flamel was mentioned, and the holy dervish remarked: "Do you actually believe Flamel is dead? . . . No, no, my friend, don't deceive yourself, Flamel is living still, neither he nor his wife are yet at all acquainted with the dead. It is not above three years ago since I left both the one and the other in the Indies, and he is one of my best friends."

The dervish then told a fragment of the secret story of Flamel and Abraham the Jew. More than three hundred years before, one of the sages of their Brotherhood was a most learned Jew, who had an ardent affection to see his family once more before renouncing the world forever. The other members of the Order attempted to dissuade him from the dangerous journey, but at last the desire grew so strong that he departed, with the solemn promise to return

as soon as possible. Reaching Paris, he found his father's descendants held in high esteem. Among them was one who seemed to have the genius for true philosophy. The Jewish sage confided in him, and even produced a transmutation of metal to prove that he possessed the secret. The afore-mentioned relative then attempted to persuade the initiated Brother to remain with him, but he would not break his word to the other members of his Order. Avarice then turned the relative into a mortal enemy, and he resolved to extinguish one of the lights of the universe. He contrived the murder of the sage to make himself master of the mysterious medicine. Such a horrible action could not remain unpunished, and for another crime this wicked man was thrown into prison and buried alive.

Nicholas Flamel came into possession of the mysterious book which had been written by the Jewish initiate, and in time, due to his own virtues, learned its secrets. Then realizing the danger of his position, Flamel decided to escape publicity by a strategy. At his advice his wife feigned a serious illness, and, when she reached the borders of Switzerland, a mock funeral was arranged. They buried in her stead a wooden image dressed up and, that nothing might seem amiss, the image was interred in one of the churches they had founded. Sometime later, Flamel repeated the strategy and joined his wife. Prior to this he made his own last will and testament in legal form, including the request that his remains be buried near those of his wife.

Lucas was astonished by the substance of the account no more than by the circumstances under which it was told. That a dervish, who had never set foot in France but was a person of extensive knowledge and superior genius, should be so precisely informed appeared little short of miraculous.



The French traveler's experience is reminiscent of that described by other disciples of the Hermetic arts, who journeyed to the Near East to be initiated by the adepts in Constantinople and Damascus.

It is reported that Cardinal Richelieu seized the houses and properties that had been owned by Flamel in an effort to secure the records of his alchemical experiments. In this way the Cardinal secured the *Book of Abraham the Jew*, and even built a laboratory to carry on experiments. Grave robbers vandalized Flamel's tomb and at that time discovered the grave to be empty. At least one copy of the complete text of the manuscript of Abraham was in existence, and it was examined in a private library in Milan.

### *Basil Valentine*

The case of Basil Valentine, Monk of St. Bennet and referred to by early writers as Prior of the Monastic House of St. Peter's at Erfurt, is an outstanding example of the deliberate obscuring of the adept tradition. To summarize the proportions of the difficulty: There is general uncertainty as to whether Valentine flourished in the 12th, 13th, 14th or 15th century, or, for that matter, whether a friar of that name ever flourished at all. As early as 1515, the Holy Roman Emperor, Maxmillian I, was so intrigued by the stories about this remarkable monk that he caused a thorough search to be made for some trace of this astonishing person among the Benedictine archives at Rome, but without success.

It has been suggested that the popular report by which Valentine was Prior of Erfurt in 1414 was a simple invention to conceal an unknown adept, who actually lived at a considerably later date. Also, it is possible that a monk of this name, who gained some reputation for obscure learning, did exist as recorded in the vulgar account, and a

circle of Hermetic initiates fathered him with their productions. The practice of attributing to ancient authors the works which might cause embarrassment to living men is well-established in the field of occult literature.

One ingenious explanation suggests that the name Basil, or *Basilus*, is equivalent in Greek to *royal* or *kingly*; and



—From the *Chymische Schriften* (Leipzig, 1760)

#### BASIL VALENTINE AND ALCHEMICAL SYMBOLS

Valentine, or *Valentinus*, is associated with Latin forms implying *strong*, *vigorous*, or *powerful*. Thus the name could mean, without unreasonable extension, the strong or mighty king. Most students of alchemy will remem-

ber the royal figure that appears in so many of the mysterious emblems. This mighty personage has several meanings, but in some cases he definitely signifies the dignity of the adept.

Johannes Gudenus, the historian of Erfurt, stated definitely that a monastery of the Benedictines existed there in the first half of the 15th century. He then assumed that Valentine was an inmate of this holy house. Unfortunately, however, his documentation at this point shifted from formal records to traditional accounts gathered from alchemical writings. As a result, the conclusions were not so conclusive as they might at first have appeared. Substantially, nothing is known of Brother Valentine except such stray and fugitive intimations as appear on the title page of various editions of his supposed writings or in the introductions affixed thereto by editors and translators equally obscure.

Most reports associate Basil Valentine with early experiments in the medicinal use of antimony. It is said that in the process of introducing this element into the pharmacopoeia our chemist experimented upon his religious Brothers so strenuously that most of them became violently ill "nigh unto death." It is in this way, if we may believe the legends, that Valentine came to name the mineral from which these medications were derived *antimoine*, which means *hostile to monks*. The researches of Valentine in the alchemical mysteries of this element are contained in his *Currus Triumphalis Antimonii*, or *The Triumphant Chariot of Antimony*.

This work, which was held in the highest esteem by disciples of the Hermetic art, seems to have been published for the first time A. D. 1600. Albert L. Caillet describes no edition earlier than the German, published in Leipzig in



1604. He mentions another edition in 1611.\* Early in the production of the *Currus Triumphalis Antimonii*, the work was associated with the commentaries of Theodore Kerckringius, whose entire contribution to alchemical literature seems to have been restricted to this one production. Editions containing the comments by Kerckringius, or Kerckring, were issued in several languages, places, and times.† Dr. Kerckringius appears to have been party to a considerable share of the uncertainty surrounding Basil Valentine. Mr. Waite says that nothing is known about Kerckringius, but we may mention that he was a Dutch physician born in Amsterdam, and a condisciple of Spinoza. He died in Hamburg in 1693.

In his *Dedicatory Epistle* to the 1685 edition of *The Triumphant Chariot*, Kerckringius makes certain ambiguous remarks addressed to the Sons of Art; that is, the Hermetic initiates. (In these selected quotations, I have italicized certain parts for sake of particular emphasis.) For example: "In return for this dedication I expect no reward but to bask in the rays of your favor, *and to be promoted in the way you know*, since you will see from this book that *I am in the straight road*, and am mounting to the bright temple of knowledge by the right path." Again he says: "In the words of Basilus, I have already gained a place in a *higher class*."

Kerckringius describes the Lord Mercury appearing to him in a vision and restoring him to the *One Way*. The good doctor then addresses his spirit visitor: "Mercury, eloquent scion of Atlas, and *father of all Alchemists*, since thou hast guided me hitherto, show me, I pray thee, the way to those Blessed Isles, which thou hast promised to reveal

\*See *Manuel Bibliographique des Sciences Psychiques ou Occultes* (Paris, 1912).

†These include the Latin editions of 1671 and 1685. The latter was translated in 1893, with a biographical preface by A. E. Waite.

to all *thine elect children*." Mercury then speaks of "a son, adorned from his birth with the royal crown which he may not share with others. Yet he may bring his friends to the palace, where sits enthroned the King of Kings, who communicates his dignity readily and liberally to all that approach him."

Later, Mercury gave Kerckringius a golden ring from the finger of the royal son, with the following words which can hardly be misunderstood: "They know the *golden branch* which must be consecrated to Proserpina before you can enter the palace of Pluto. When he sees this *ring*, perhaps one will open to you with a *word* the door of that chamber, where sits enthroned in his magnificence the Desire of all Nations, who is *known only to the Sages*." Those who have studied the rituals and symbols of the ancient Mysteries can scarcely fail to recognize the landmarks by which Kerckringius is revealing, in the form of an allegory, the Lodge of the Adepts and the circumstances of his own acceptance into this Hermetic Brotherhood.

*The Secret Books, or Last Testament of Basil Valentine, of the Benedictine Order*, appeared first in Strasbourg in 1645. The edition published in London, 1671, bears title and inscription thus: *The Last Will and Testament of Basil Valentine, Monke of the Order of St. Bennet. Which alone, he hid under a table of marble, behind the High-Altar of the Cathedral Church, in the Imperial City of Erford; leaving it there to be found by him, whom God's Providence should make worthy of it*. In his preface to this work, Valentine is made to say: "And because this book affordeth another knowledge, differing from others of my writings, wherein I have not written so obscurely, nor made I use of such subtilities, as the ancients did, who lived before me and ended their days happily, therefore doth it require another place also to be laid up in, and kept secret from the

perverseness of men in the world. I do not desire it should be buried with me, to be a prey, and food for worms, but it shall be left above ground, and kept secret from wicked men, and my purpose is, that it shall be laid into a secret place, where none shall come near it, but he, for whom God hath ordained it, other writings of mine shall sooner see the public light."

There seems to be some uncertainty as to the exact place in which Valentine concealed his Hermetic legacy. According to one historian, the great alchemist enclosed his manuscript in one of the pillars of the abbey church. There the priceless treasure remained for a long time, but was at last discovered "by the fortunate violence of a thunderbolt." In this way, a convenient explanation is given for the late appearance of the *Testament*. We are reminded of the vault in which the Rosicrucian arcana rested unknown for one hundred and twenty years. In each instance, and there are many, highly-significant manuscripts and documents, supposedly prepared at an older time, are available only after the beginning of the 17th century.

We might be inclined to take a romantic view of the situation were it not that Valentine's writings, especially *The Triumphant Chariot*, contain internal evidence of being written later than the editors and publishers would have us believe. For instance, the appendix to *The Triumphant Chariot*, in which the author concludes his arguments, states that antimony has many good purposes and uses beyond that of the typographer or printer. This is most revealing, as Valentine is supposed to have been laid to rest *before* the invention of printing. There are references also throughout Valentine's writings to historical incidents which had not occurred in the lifetime of the Benedictine Brother. Everything points to the emergence of a considerable literature attributed to this man during the critical years of the Uni-



versal Reformation, the period from 1590 to 1630. Perhaps, then, we shall not be far from the truth if we attribute this fortuitous emergence to the same group responsible for the Rosicrucian *Manifestoes*.

We should consider the contributions of the elusive Basil and the almost equally-elusive Kerckringius to one of the greatest mysteries of the alchemistical tradition—the coming of Elias the Artist. In one place our commentator tells us: “Are not those times at hand, in which Elias the Artist, the Revealer of greater Mysteries is to come? Of whose coming Paracelsus so clearly prophesied in various parts of his writings. . . . Therefore be comforted, be comforted, O lover of Chemistry, and prepare the way of that Elias, who brings happy times and will reveal more secrets than our ancestors, by reason of envy, and the iniquity of their days durst discover. . . . the times of Elias come ‘for arts also, as well as is understood of other things, have their Elias,’ saith Theophrastus.\*

To summarize our position: Basil Valentine was the product of those same Orders of the Quest which precipitated the whole elaborate pageantry of alchemical emblemism. Elias the Artist was the perfect Master of the Great Work; in fact, the personification of the art itself by which Nature is regenerated and redeemed. To the Christian Hermetist, Elias was Christ, in whom the miracle of transmutation was fully revealed to those of sufficient internal perception. Thus we find in alchemy a trace of the Eastern doctrine of Avatars, those men out of God who appear at the times appointed. It is important to remember that alchemy did not take on the overtones of the World Mystery until it became the vehicle of that Society of Unknown Philosophers

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\*Paracelsus predicted the advent of Elias the Artist in the 8th chapter of his treatise, *De Mineralibus*.

which set up the Invisible Empire, to perpetuate in the modern world the great Mystery Schools of antiquity.

### *Paracelsus*

Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim (Paracelsus), often called the Swiss Hermes, was the most spectacular figure in the European adept tradition. He was born at Einsiedeln in Switzerland about 1493. Paracelsus was a learned but eccentric man, who spent a great part of his life in travel, visiting most of the countries of Europe and, according to some reports, reaching Asia. While in Russia, he was taken prisoner by the Tatars, who brought him into the presence of the great khan. This fabulous monarch was so impressed with the erudition of the Swiss doctor that arrangements were made for the physician to accompany the son of the khan on an embassy to Constantinople.

From van Helmont we learn that Paracelsus was initiated in Constantinople into the supreme secrets of alchemy by a college of Islamic savants, who bestowed upon him the Universal Mystery under the symbolism of the Stone Azoth, the "philosophic fire" of the Western adepts. Thereafter, Paracelsus carried this Stone with him in a special knob on the hilt of his sword. Most early portraits of this Master emphasize the sword handle with its magical contents. After his initiation in the City of the Golden Horn, the great chemist is reported to have continued his journey to India, but this has never been historically established.

Paracelsus had for his first teacher the initiate Trithemius of Sponheim. This learned abbot revealed many of the secrets of the cabala and of the Christian mysteries to the young Paracelsus, but was not sufficiently interested in the practical side of medicine to satisfy his youthful disciple. It is then reported that Paracelsus received the assistance of

the Master Basil Valentine, who initiated him in philosophic chemistry. This reference from an early manuscript presents certain difficulties in dates, but it is possible that this establishes the actual period in which Valentine was working.

The greatest of the European Masters with whom Paracelsus associated was the Hermetic adept, Salomon Tris-



—From *Geheimes Manuscript*

#### 16TH CENTURY PEN-AND-INK PORTRAIT OF PARACELSUS

mosin. In our collection is a manuscript of unique Paracelsian interest. It is undated, written on very heavy paper, and bound with a simple label on the backbone, *Geheimes Manuscript* (*Secret Manuscript*). The title page is inscribed with a large black cross, with the word *Iesus* written as an acrostic on the upright and crossarm. The initials



N.R.I. appear on the upper end of the cross. About the cross is written in Latin: "In the cross I am a sphere. From it comes true wisdom." At the bottom of the page is the inscription: "After the cross, light; after the clouds, jubilation will arise." As a frontispiece, there is a pen-and-ink sketch of Salomon Trismosin, and in the body of the text a similar portrait of Paracelsus, with magic squares above him and the Stone Azoth in the hilt of his sword.

The manuscript contains copies of correspondence from Salomon Trismosin to Paracelsus, and some fragments of Trithemius and Isaac of Holland giving alchemical processes and formulas. The first letter is from Salomon Trismosin, written in the village of Lusin, April 18, 1515. Extracts from this letter leave little doubt as to the relationship between the two men: "You have been to me the most beloved disciple of my school, therefore I will reveal to you what otherwise I keep secret . . . I cannot teach you, neither can any man in this world, how to place your hand so that the Lion will show himself in his good rays. You must experience it . . . . I have consummated the Work for another time. I will now rest. Amen!" In closing, Trismosin refers to Paracelsus as "my beloved former pupil."

In the British Museum, there is a magnificent manuscript on vellum dated 1582, which is a copy of the alchemical treatises of Salomon Trismosin, titled *Splendor Solis*. At hand also is *La Toyson d'Or*, . . . *Par ce Grand Philosophe Salomon Trismosin Precepteur de Paracelse* (Paris, 1612). This little work, which was dedicated by permission to the Prince of Conde, is illustrated with twenty-two hand-colored Hermetic emblems, pasted into spaces prepared for them in the text. The figures are identical in import with the lovely miniatures adorning the British Museum manuscript. According to an obscure work, *Aureum Vellus*, printed

in 1598, the adept from whom Paracelsus received the *Magnum Opus* was his fellow countryman, Trismosin. It is also reported that the Master Salomon possessed the Universal Medicine, and was seen alive by a French traveler at the end of the 17th century.\*

Some details are available about the career of Trismosin, whose real name probably was Pfeiffer. This adept began his search for the mystery of the Stone in 1473. He studied in Venice as an itinerant chemist, where he worked in the laboratory of a German, named Tauler. Later he went away from Venice "to a still better place for my purpose, where Cabalistic and Magical books in Egyptian language were entrusted to my care; these I had carefully translated into Greek, and then the Greek translated into Latin. There I found and captured the Treasure of the Egyptians."\*\*

Although the esoteric tradition is indeed the mother of Mysteries, it is a mistake to assume that the several schools which flourished in Europe between the 15th and 19th centuries were of great antiquity as Societies or Fraternities. The case of Paracelsus is typical of the prevailing tendency to confuse principles and persons. H. P. Blavatsky writes: "Although there had been alchemists before the days of Paracelsus, he was the first who had passed through the true initiation, that last ceremony which conferred on the adept the power of traveling toward the 'burning bush' over the holy ground, and to 'burn the golden calf in the fire, grind it to powder, and strow it upon the water.' "†

The memory of Paracelsus passed to the keeping of enthusiasts who adopted him as the patron saint and true founder of their dubious modern sects and cults. We are told, for example, that Bombastus von Hohenheim was a

\*See *Paracelsus*, by Franz Hartmann (London, 1887).

\*\*See *Splendor Solis*, with notes by J. K. (London, 1911).

†See *Isis Unveiled*.

great Rosicrucian and the Grand Master of the Brotherhood. This notion probably originated from the reference in the *Fama* to the writings of Paracelsus being found in the symbolic vault of Father C. R. C. The mere fact that the *Fama* also states definitely that Paracelsus was not a member of the Order but greatly admired by them passes unnoticed because it is inconvenient.

The prophetic hieroglyphics of Paracelsus include rose-form devices. There is a quaint figure of a man in monkish garb, holding a rose in one hand and a scythe in the other. Figure No. 26 of the *Figuræ Magicæ* features a crown, from which rises an open rose—the flower itself supporting a capital F. While these symbols bring comfort to some devotees, it is needless to say that, like the rose in Simon Studion's *Naometria* (MS., 1604), they prove nothing. Those seeking to understand the rose of Paracelsus and, for that matter, the symbolism of the rose in the entire European alchemistical tradition will do well to study the "Rose of Damascus." To do this, however, one must explore the secret doctrines of the Dervishes and the Sufis, as did Paracelsus.

The effect of the Paracelsian corpus upon the Continental mind was profound. Science, religion, politics, education, and medicine were broadly and deeply influenced by this choleric and eccentric physician. Even Erasmus consulted him on matters of health, and the contributions which Paracelsus made to the pharmacopoeia have been adequately summarized by Lessing. "Those who imagine that the medicine of Paracelsus is a system of superstitions which we have fortunately outgrown will, if they once learn to know its principles, be surprised to find that it is based on a superior kind of knowledge which we have not yet attained, but into which we may hope to grow."\*

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\*See *Paracelsus*.



The courage of Paracelsus and his complete indifference to the opinions of his illustrious contemporaries made it possible for him to serve as a channel for the dissemination of the mystical and magical doctrines of the Masters of Islam and the initiates of the Eastern Church of Christendom. Thus, this Swiss Hermes carried on the unfinished work of the Knights Templars. The Invisible-Philosophic Empire was seated in Asia Minor and North Africa from the period of the collapse of the Greek schools to the advent of Paracelsus. For more than a thousand years, Europeans seeking initiation were forced to journey to Constantinople, Damascus, or Alexandria. Such travels are specifically mentioned in connection with early European adepts and initiates. As the era of the emancipation of Europe approached, the center of the Esoteric Fraternities moved into the Balkan area where it remained for some time and left important landmarks. It crossed Europe by slow and silent degrees, establishing several focal points, and from Albion's magic isle it administered the magnificent project of planning and guiding the colonization of the Western Hemisphere.

Although several permanent, or at least enduring, secret assemblies were formed to serve as auxiliaries to the principal purposes of the adepts, these groups should never be confused with the grand motion which remains nameless and whose official representatives have never been actually identified. Even a man like Paracelsus was not a free agent, for, like St.-Germain, he was the servant of "one stronger than himself."

It is convenient to interpose dramatic personalities between a working project and its source. In this way, efforts to destroy either the plan or the planner are frustrated. Cagliostro was a typical example of a scapegoat. He was a voluntary victim, fully aware of the responsibility

entrusted to him. After he served his purpose by centering attention upon himself and away from the vital facts, he was quietly rescued from his predicament. *For some reason*, the Holy Office decided against capital punishment, and the glamorous Comte was sentenced to perpetual imprisonment in the Castle of San Leo. After the excitement subsided, he retired to Asia, and the official announcement of his death forestalled further inquiry.

The funerals of initiates and adepts usually are well-publicized but poorly attended. For thousands of years the symbolism of death has been associated with the ritualism of the Mystery Schools. The so-called *Book of the Dead* of the ancient Egyptians was in reality a religious drama given in the temples, and veiled the mysteries of the death and resurrection of the human soul. Even today, those entering certain religious Orders are said to have died so far as the physical world is concerned, and receive new religious names. This practice was used frequently during that period of European history in which it was convenient, if not absolutely necessary, to take refuge in obscurity.

When Francis Bacon, one of the most powerful men of England, is supposed to have departed from this mortal sphere, there is no record that his body lay in state and no account of his funeral has survived. In fact, there is no agreement as to the cause of his death or the place in which it occurred. St.-Germain did not fare any better. His death was announced, but no witness saw the body who has seen fit to record his presence. Even when the tomb of an illuminate has been identified, sometimes it is empty or contains the bones of some unknown mortal. Inscriptions have been falsified, dates manufactured or mutilated, and natural decay has been hastened by artificial means.

In the case of Paracelsus, it appears that he died on September 24, 1541. *Due to circumstances*, he was buried the same day, and the Prince Archbishop arranged appropriate solemnities. On one pretext or another, the tomb was opened several times. The real reason was not always pious interest in the comfort of his bones, but was inspired by reports that priceless secrets of chemistry and great treasures had been buried with this poor but honest savant. In the 18th century, a marble pyramid was placed in the porch of the church. In this obelisk was a niche with a small iron door, and here the earthly remains of the great chemist were placed.

One biographer of Paracelsus\* devotes a few lines to research carried on by Doctors Sommering and Aberle upon the bones of their illustrious fellow physician. Sommering discovered the wound in the back, which seemed to support the report that Paracelsus had been assassinated. Dr. Aberle, somewhat later, was most industrious and examined the bones in 1878, 1881, 1884, and 1886. As may be expected, he disagreed with the findings of Dr. Sommering. There was discussion as to whether Paracelsus had been flung down amongst rocks, and had his neck broken and his skull shattered. Aberle decided that Paracelsus could not have dictated his will with a broken neck, but there is doubt as to whether he could have done better with a dagger in his back. The doctors compromised on rickets as the cause of death! If the body does not fit the facts, perhaps the bones belong to an unidentified stranger who had perished from some violent cause—or rickets. Incidentally, the sword with the Philosophers' Stone in the handle has never been found or mentioned.

Paracelsus traveled extensively, and is known to have selected his acquaintances from classes popularly regarded

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\*Anna M. Stoddart, in *The Life of Paracelsus*.



with ill-favor. He frequented the camps of gypsies, the dens of witches, and the cells of aged ascetics. He could not have done this without coming into direct contact with the Bogomiles, the Albigenses, and the Troubadours. He was always the champion of lost causes and underprivileged groups. Though nominally Christian, his whole philosophy was pagan and heretical in the terms of his day. No man of his accomplishments in the cabala, talismanic magic, magnetic therapy, and the Hermetic arts could have remained unaware of the great program of the Universal Reformation that was developing beneath the surface of European politics. His references to Elias the Artist indicate his acquaintance with the program of the Mystery Schools.

In the *Order Kabbalistique de la Rose Croix*, issued in 1891 and signed by several persons of distinction, including Stanislas de Guaita, Jacques Papus, and Oswald Wirth, occurs the following panegyric: "Elias Artista! Genius director of the Rose-Cross, symbolical personification of the Order, Ambassador of the St. Paraclet! Paracelsus the Great has predicted thy coming, O collective breath of generous vindications. Spirit of liberty, of science and love which must regenerate the world!"

### *Henry (Heinrich) Khunrath*

The name of Dr. John Dee occasionally occurs in association with persons involved in the Universal Reformation. Dee resented certain comments on his book, *Monas Hieroglyphica*, made by Andreas Libavius, and entered into a mild controversy with him. Libavius first attacked and then defended the early Rosicrucian *Manifestoes*. Dr. Dee emerged as an astrologer, alchemist, and ardent spiritist-magician, with a profound knowledge of the Hermetic Mystery, though it has been difficult to determine his correct

place in the descent of the esoteric tradition. Dee is known also to have had the acquaintance of Henry Khunrath, a mystical alchemist of distinction. Eliphas Levi refers to Khunrath as "a Sovereign Prince of the Rosy Cross, worthy in all respects of this scientific and mystical title."\*



—From *Amphitheatrum Sapientiae Aeternae*, etc.

#### HENRY KHUNRATH, MYSTIC AND ALCHEMIST

Henry Khunrath, Doctor of Divinity and of Medicine, and *amateur de sagesse*, is reported to have attained the 6th degree of Hermetic initiation which brought him to the threshold of adeptship. His principal contribution to the literature of the Mysteries was *Amphitheatrum Sapientiae Aeternae Solius Verae, Christiano-Kabalisticum, Divino-*

\*See *History of Magic*.

*Magicum, nec non Physico-Chemicum, Tertriunum, Catholicon* (Hanover, 1609). Several phantom editions of this work are referred to by early writers. Some of these probably exist, as I have examined a copy dated 1605. The *Amphitheatrum* opens with an argument, setting forth the seven grades of the theosophical wisdom, and Khunrath's observations upon the matter of these grades are no doubt responsible for Levi's unqualified endorsement.

As is usual of suspected initiates, few particulars are available of the life and activities of Henry Khunrath. He was born in Saxony about 1555, traveled extensively, and held a doctorate of medicine from the University of Basle. In several respects, his career paralleled the eccentric pattern previously established by Paracelsus, to whose writings Khunrath was profoundly indebted. Like the immortal Bombastus, the German physician was by temperament irritable and eccentric, and was given to a broad criticism of existing religious and educational institutions. Khunrath appears to have been a devout Protestant, and his natural choler was considerably softened by a devotional spirit. He was initiated by a German adept named Steiner, of whom nothing is known except that he was working in 1574 and left some writings, which were edited and compiled by later alchemists.

Khunrath practiced medicine, first at Hamburg and later at Dresden. He was not especially successful as a practitioner, probably due to his disposition; and he died the 9th of September 1601, at the age of about forty-five years. The *Amphitheatrum* is said to have been among Khunrath's manuscripts and was presented to the world through the industry of his friend, Erasmus Wolfart, who added a preface. The book is remarkable for a magnificent series of engravings, setting forth the mysteries of Christian cabalism and alchemy. These plates were engraved in Antwerp,



and several of them are dated 1602. The book presents many confusing details, and suggests that it was compiled by a group with diversified resources.

Certain of Khunrath's diagrams with modifications recur in later works claiming to have originated in the sanctum of the Rosy Cross. This "mystic citizen of the Eternal Kingdom," as he has been called, was evidently familiar to Michael Maier, and Khunrath's name has also been linked with the Dukes of Brunswick, who took such kindly interest in the career of Johann Valentin Andreac. The interlocking careers of most, if not all, of the early Rosicrucian apologists stimulate reflection.

Jakob Boehme, the psychochemical mystic, received his illumination about the time of Khunrath's death, and inherited the principal concepts with which Khunrath was concerned. The Hermetic doctrine, as unfolded in the *Amphitheatrum*, is a kind of Christian Yoga. The path of initiation begins with purification—the cleansing of the inner life—and with the realization that illumination is possible only to those who have purified their consciousness of all worldliness. The second step is a discipline for controlling the sensory perceptions and the attainment of an inner stillness, by which the human soul is rendered capable of receiving in meekness and humility the light of the Eternal. The true Stone of the philosopher is the transmuted and regenerated soul of man, which not only attains to its own perfection but can also bestow itself and its power upon other creatures. Thus the powers of the Christened soul become the Universal Medicine, by which all impure natures attain to health and eternal life in God through Christ. Thus the Word is made flesh by the mystery of art. The Hermetic Elixir is truth itself which, revealed in the human heart, perfects Nature. The adept is the "living

Stone" which, rejected by those who build in darkness, becomes, by the glory of God, the head of the corner.

Many of the alchemists, especially those of the previous century, emphasized the physical transmutation of metals, and spent their goods in the quest of temporal wealth. Khunrath does not appear to conflict with the testimony of the great Masters who preceded him, but he really emphasized a doctrine already cautiously circulated but frequently overlooked by avaricious gold makers. By this emphasis, he exposed the genuine proportions of the Albigensian heresy. These persecuted mystics taught "a way of divine union." The regeneration of man and his institutions could be attained only by a symbolic resurrection. The soul, when lifted up to its God by illumination, drew all other mundane things unto itself. Only the perfected man could rescue his mortal institutions. Thus, in the *Rosarium Philosophorum*, the consummation of the Great Work is symbolized by the resurrection of Christ, crowned with glory, who is depicted stepping from a sepulcher from which a heavy lid has been rolled away. The association of cabalism, alchemy, and transcendental magic with the emblems of Christian redemption did not originate in the 16th or 17th century, but was rescued at that time from the lost Gnosis. The esoteric tradition merely emerged as the operative key to a faith which had languished for centuries in a state of general benightedness.

The Mysteries always operated through two parallel streams of descent. The philosophical Orders emphasized the wisdom aspect of the Universal Mystery. The mystical Orders stressed the devotional aspect. Thus understanding and faith, identical in content, accomplished two works in one. Through understanding, the initiate overcame the illusion of worldliness, and through faith, he attained to participation in the substance of the Divine.

*Jan (Johann) Baptista van Helmont*

To the modern encyclopedists, the character of Jan Baptista van Helmont suggests a mild form of schizophrenia or dual personality. On the one hand, he was a progressive Humanist, touched by the new order of learning cultivated by Francis Bacon; and on the other hand, he was a supernaturalist, a mystic, and alchemist, with a pronounced fondness for the cosmical and microcosmical speculations of Paracelsus. Under such conditions, it has seemed the wiser course to acknowledge that he was the first to distinguish gases from natural atmosphere, and to credit him with the invention of the word *gas*, suggested by the Greek *chaos*, to signify these tenuous substances.

Van Helmont was born of a noble family in Brabant in 1557. He was a lecturer on physics in the university at seventeen, and a doctor of medicine at twenty-two. By the time he secured his doctorate, he was familiar with the theory and practice of medicine from Hippocrates to Avicenna. Although a licensed physician, he was less inclined toward practice than toward theory, and devoted most of his time and means to research. After ten years of devoted but unsuccessful experimentation, he came upon a wandering Paracelsian chemist (Hermetic initiate?), through whom he gained certain choice secrets of the alchemic art.

Convinced that he possessed important keys to chemical analysis, van Helmont retired to a castle near Brussels, where he lived in almost complete retirement. He only ventured forth to minister to his sick neighbors, whom he treated without charge. He declined court appointments, and lived in seclusion and scholarship till his death, which occurred in 1644. The writings of van Helmont reveal familiarity with the best classical authors and, at the same time, much reflection and original thinking. His character was above re-





—From *Ausgang der Artznen-Kunst*

JAN (JOHANN) BAPTISTA VAN HELMONT

proach, and he was untouched by the vices and corruptions of his day. He enjoyed the admiration and respect of his more enlightened contemporaries, but had few intimates.

About 1609, van Helmont married Margaret van Ranst, a woman of quality and wealth. Apparently the marriage was successful and they remained devoted throughout life. As van Helmont rejected and exposed certain follies of the Galenists, his success in treating obscure ailments and his contributions to the literature of medicine soon aroused the animosity of both the Church and the university. In 1621, he was incautious enough to publish a treatise on the curing of wounds by magnetism and sympathy. In this work, he opposed the conclusions of the Jesuit writer, Johannes Roberti, who insisted that these cures were the work of the devil. Naturally, van Helmont was immediately suspected of heretical ideas. A recent biographer summarizes the situation which developed, thus: "As a matter of fact, van Helmont was the last man who could justly be accused of heresy. He was a pious and devout catholic, and from a modern point of view is, indeed, open to criticism for having treated the dogmas of the Church with too great deference. Thus, in one place in his works, for instance, he refused to speak of an earthquake as a movement of the earth, because the Church taught that the earth was immobile."<sup>\*</sup>

His enemies continued to press the charge of heresy and, supported by reactionary medical and theological leaders, succeeded in having van Helmont arrested in 1634. The Holy Inquisition of Spain condemned certain propositions in his books, his manuscripts and papers were confiscated, and he was imprisoned in the convent of the Friars Minor. This was the least of the physician's misfortunes, however, for he was released after two weeks by posting a very large bail, said to have been supplied by his father-in-law. He was then permitted to serve his term in his own house. The larger tragedy was the sickness of his two older sons.

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<sup>\*</sup>See *Johannes Baptista van Helmont*, by Stanley Redgrove (London, 1922).



They were placed in the hospital at Vilvorde, with the promise that they would be treated with their father's remedies. Once the boys were in the hospital, however, the nuns refused to keep their word and treated the patients with the orthodox Galenical remedies; and as a consequence, both boys died.

In his autobiographical notes, van Helmont acknowledged that he had met one of the alchemical adepts who had given him a small amount of the "powder of projection." With this material, he transmuted nine ounces of quicksilver into pure gold. In *De Vita Eterna*, the physician commits himself completely to the alchemistical tradition: "I have seen and I have touched the philosophers' stone more than once; the color of it was like saffron in powder, but heavy and shining like pounded glass." He further states that he personally performed operations of transmutation many times, even in the presence of a large company. He acknowledges acquaintance with a master artist, who possessed enough of the "red stone" to make gold to the weight of two hundred thousand pounds.

These references and many others have proved most annoying to those condemning the principles of alchemy. Van Helmont was a man of large learning, and it is impossible to dismiss his remarks as the boastings of an impostor. Although the references are veiled, we must also conclude that van Helmont possessed clairvoyant faculties. In his treatise, *The Image of God*,\* the physician describes one of his mystical experiences. He explains that after long contemplation he chanced into a calm sleep "beyond the limits of reason." After thirteen years, he attained the "Sabbath of tranquillity." He beheld his own soul, or interior nature. There was a transcendent light "in the

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\*In *A Ternary of Paradoxes*, translated by Walter Charleston (London, 1650).



figure of a man, whose whole was homogeneous, actively discerning, a substance spiritual, crystalline, and lucent by its own native splendor." The light was so brilliant that it was difficult to discern anything within it except a cortex, or shrine. Van Helmont evidently saw the magnetic field of the human body by what he called "an intellectual vision in the mind," for he stated definitely that had the eye of the body beheld so resplendent an object, it would have been blinded. The physician described other visions, mostly symbolical, and indicated under appropriate figures his initiation into Esoteric Schools.

In one of his dreams, van Helmont beheld "the vaults of Nature." He seemed to see Galen with a tiny lamp enter the vaults and, stumbling, almost fall over the threshold. Later Paracelsus, bearing a great torch, entered the darkened chambers, using a thread, like that of Ariadne, that he might be able to retrace his steps. Paracelsus, unfortunately, filled the vaults with fumes from the smoke of his torch. Van Helmont himself then attempted to explore the mysterious rooms with his own small lantern, and proceeding according to the rules of caution "there saw far other things than the foregoing company of Ancestors had described." The writings of this great chemist deserve much more consideration than they have yet received. He was not only a pioneer in the sciences, but was also one of the outstanding mystical philosophers of the modern world.

### *Michael Sendivogius*

The life and adventures of the Moravian adept, Michael Sendivogius, have been the subject of numerous accounts, mostly derogatory. He was the disciple of the Scottish adept, Alexander Sethon. The tragedy of Sethon's life indicates clearly why it was necessary for the alchemistical philosophers to circulate their doctrines with extreme

secrecy. He was imprisoned by Christian II, the Elector of Saxony, and subjected to every torture that covetousness and cruelty could suggest. He was pierced with pointed iron, scorched with molten lead, burned with fire, beaten with rods, and racked from head to foot; yet his constant state never forsook him, and he refused to betray his God-given knowledge.\*

Sendivogius, learning of Sethon's plight, sold his house to raise the necessary money, and settled himself in Dresden in the vicinity of the prison. Gaining the favor of several officials with gifts and bribes, he was able to release Sethon, and carried him from the prison in his arms, for the older man was unable to walk. They escaped in a post chaise. On his deathbed two years later, Sethon revealed his knowledge to Sendivogius, and presented his rescuer with a certain amount of the powder of transmutation.

Sendivogius in his turn, known to possess what covetous princes regarded as a formula of limitless material wealth, was forced to flee from place to place. He was imprisoned on several occasions, and once freed himself by cutting an iron bar from the window of his dungeon and making a rope of his own garments. He changed clothes with a servant, and concealed his formulas and materials in the step of his carriage, with one of his lackeys dressed to impersonate him sitting inside. Sendivogius died in Parma in 1646 at the age of eighty-four years, having been Councilor of State to four emperors. Most biographers have assumed that his entire fame depended upon the powder of projection which had been given to him by Sethon, and that when this was exhausted, he lacked the knowledge to provide himself with more.

There is an account that Sendivogius was visited in his castle on the frontiers of Poland and Silesia by two stran-

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\*See *Lives of Alchemystical Philosophers* (London, 1888).

gers, one young and the other old. They presented him with a letter bearing twelve seals. At length persuaded to open the letter, he learned that they were a deputation from the Society of the Rosy Cross which wished to initiate him. He is said to have declined the invitation, but the report is incomplete; and in light of other matters, the popular opinion may require revision.

When Elias the Artist recommended to Helvetius that he should study the works of Sendivogius, it seems strange that the writing of this highly-controversial character should have been so emphasized. Perhaps there is more to this than meets the eye. The manuscript collection of Dr. Sigismund Bacstrom includes *Letters of Michael Sendivogius to the Rosey Crusian Society*. We are not able to learn that this remarkable correspondence has ever been published. Dr. Bacstrom notes that he secured access to a manuscript copy of these letters, which had been made by Dr. Sibly in 1791.

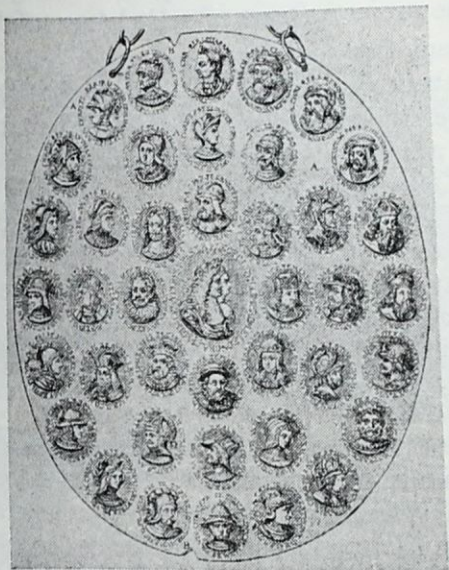
Ebenezer Sibly gained some reputation as an astrologer, and dabbled extensively in transcendentalism, leaving quite a trail of manuscript copies of old and rare works. He may have had access to a collection of tracts by Sendivogius published in 1691, which dealt with a secret Cabalistic Society, including correspondence on the subject. Bacstrom describes Dr. Sibly's translation as "barbarous." Enough remains, however, to indicate that Sendivogius was a member of a functioning Fraternity. In the first letter, he extends greetings to a most honored friend and "most worthy companion of the Society of Unknown Philosophers." He refers to the patron of the new member, and notes that a plan is under way to enlarge the Society throughout France. He therefore sends, as requested, a Latin copy of the statutes of his Society in strict confidence. He then agrees to instruct the new member in the theoretical and practical aspects of alchemy.



There are, in all, fifty-four letters, dated between February 7, 1646 and January 18, 1646-7. They were all written from Brussels, apparently in the last year of the life of Sendivogius. At the conclusion is a short section titled "The Hieroglyphical Seal of the Society of Unknown Philosophers." This is accompanied by four circular figures, which are nothing more than exact copies of the designs appearing in early editions of Jakob Boehme's writings. There is nothing to indicate the authority by which Bactstrom included these symbols. We shall later have further reference to the Society of the Unknown Philosophers, which was one of the early forms of the Royal Society. In his correspondence, Robert Boyle mentions this Society of Unknown Philosophers, whose meetings he was invited to attend. Again we are in the presence of an interlocking directorate of European intellectuals, whose paths cross at odd angles.

We should remember that most works relating to the esoteric tradition in Europe were written by adversaries or skeptics. This can only mean a general disregard for subtleties and overtones. For example, in his *Mundus Subterraneus*, the illustrious German Jesuit Father, Athanasius Kircher, writing in 1678, refers to a transmutation of metals which took place in his presence. The Brothers of the Rose Cross are drawn into this episode. Father Kircher was visited by an unknown man who made gold in his presence. The visitor refused any reward, described himself as a traveler, and retired to his inn. The next day he had vanished, bag and baggage. Kircher was so intrigued that he attempted to repeat the experiment, but failed utterly, and wasted a considerable part of his worldly goods in the experiment. The pious Jesuit concluded that his unknown guest was a devil seeking to deceive men by the lust of riches. He was only saved by the kindly assistance of his confessor.

An anonymous alchemist, who was called the Adept Merchant of Lubec, performed a transmutation before Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden, in Pomerania about the year 1620. The gold so-produced was coined in medals



—From *In the Pronaos of the Temple of Wisdom*,  
by Franz Hartmann

#### THE MEDAL OF COUNT LEOPOLD HOFFMAN

This medal, long-preserved in the Imperial treasure chamber in Vienna, was partly transformed into gold by Wenzel Seiler, a monk of the Order of St. Augustine. About one third of the upper part of the medal remains silver, and the notches in the edge were made in 1883 to test the metals.

bearing the king's effigy, with Mercury and Venus on the reverse. The Adept Merchant did not appear rich, and he engaged in no business which brought him a profit, yet a great fortune was found in his house after his death.

In the early years of the 18th century, a gentleman presented himself to the King of Prussia at Berlin, and promised to communicate the secret of the transmuting of metals. The king desired to see proof, and the operation was performed in his presence with all precautions against imposition. The projection was completely successful.

A transmutation took place at Dresden before Frederick Augustus about the year 1715. An apothecary's apprentice had befriended a sick and unknown traveler. This wandering adept, out of gratitude, gave the youth a small amount of the powder of projection to insure his future security. The vanity of the apprentice nearly cost him his life, but he escaped death by professing the secret of making a delftware equal to china. The amateur alchemist succeeded, and laid the foundation of the famous Dresden manufacturies.

### *Eugenius Philalethes*

There was little to indicate that Thomas Vaughan would rise to distinction in the secret sciences. He was born in a farmhouse in Llansaintffraid in Wales, educated at Jesus College, Oxford, graduating with the degree of Bachelor of Arts. He was ordained by the Bishop of St. David's, and received the living of St. Bridget's in his native town. He jogged along as rector of his parish until he was unfortunate enough to be on the losing side of the second civil war, which ended with the execution of Charles I. Vaughan was ousted for several offenses, of which peculiarities of character were the lesser, and royalist persuasions the greater. He found asylum at Oxford, but traveled frequently to London, and seems to have visited Gray's Inn on occasion. In September 1651, he married a lady named Rebecca, to whom he was deeply devoted until her death in 1658.

The notebook of Thomas Vaughan contains sufficient personal material to show that he was essentially a mystic



## Chorus

## PHILOSOPHORUM.

Semper hanc ac humiles, hæc Artis amussis ad arces;  
 et Via nostra Doctrina In humilitate sita est:



—From *Chymica Vannus*, (Amsterdam, 1666)

The lower compartment of this figure shows five philosophers within a band representing the mystic tie of initiation.

rather than a chemical philosopher. He reports occasions on which his wife appeared to him after her death, and

implies that the door of the Mysteries opened for him during the early years of his marriage. The tone of the diary can be gathered from an entry made after Vaughan received in a vision what he believed might be an intimation of his own death: "Great is the love and goodness of my God and most happy shall I be in this interpretation if I may meet her [Rebecca had died a few weeks previously] again so soon and begin the heavenly and eternal life with her, in the very same month wherein we began the earthly: which I beseech my good God to grant us for his dear Son and our Saviour's sake, Christ Jesus. Amen!"

It seems advisable to mention here a remarkable book, *Chymica Vannus*, associated with Vaughan on somewhat uncertain grounds. Caillet attributes the *Chymica Vannus* to him, in his *Manuel Bibliographique*. The French transcendentalist, Stanislas de Guaita, describes the book as a very mysterious work on alchemy and mystical philosophies, published in 1666 by the Brothers of the Rose Cross. He adds that in the catalogue of *Bibliothèque* of the Abbe Sepher, the *Chymica Vannus* is definitely attributed to Philalethes, Grand Master of the Rose Cross.

*Chymica Vannus* is illustrated with curious symbols, the frontispiece being in the form of the cross of the adepts—a maltese cross within a circle ornamented with inscriptions. In one remarkable plate, reproduced herewith, the philosophic school is represented by five men in classical costume, standing within a band or circle, clearly indicating the "mystic tie." The entire work binds the speculations of the 17th-century Society of the Unknown Philosophers with the great classical Greek and Latin schools of initiation.

Most biographers assume that Vaughan died childless, but there is a report or legend that he had a son. This uncertainty resulted in a complication almost unique in its



field. In connection with the confusion over a possible issue, we must advance the case of Diana Vaughan.

This lady claimed to be a direct descendant of Thomas Vaughan, the Welsh adept. Miss Vaughan published extensive memoirs, concerned principally with expose and defamation of character. Her literary style has been described as not exactly captivating. Her productions included a life of Thomas Vaughan based upon secret family records. Her approach is reminiscent of the completely delightful biography of Shakespeare, fabricated by that gifted young forger, William Henry Ireland. There is one difference, however. There was no maliciousness in Ireland's mind; whereas Miss Vaughan seems to have been motivated by a devout desire to destroy the reputation of honorable and distinguished persons.

Diana of the Palladians (if we may create the title) was dedicated to the discovery of Satanism in outstanding religious, philosophical, and fraternal organizations of the 19th century, with the exception of the church which she had recently joined by conversion. She made a magnificent muddle involving Freemasonry, various mystical groups, and the 19th-century Rosicrucian-Masonic auxiliaries. She accused the great Freemasonic scholar, General Albert Pike, of being the secret head of a cult of devil worshipers, and that venerable old gentleman, Dr. W. Wynn Westcott, a prominent Mason and Supreme Magus of the English Rosicrucian Society, of being the chief Luciferian of the British Isles. She also "discovered" that the skull of Jacques De Molay, the martyred Grand Master of the Knights Templars, was being preserved in Charleston, South Carolina, to inspire later-day worshipers of Baphomet.

Together with Leo Taxil (the pseudonym of M. Gabriel Jogand-Pages), a formidable adversary of Freemasonry, and several others less eminent, Diana Vaughan circulated



a quantity of information and misinformation which must be examined with some thoughtfulness. The best survey of this rather appalling situation is contained in *Devil-Worship in France*, an unfortunate title which obscures the scope of the work, by Arthur Edward Waite (London, 1896). While Mr. Waite is rightfully indignant, he seems to have made the mistake of being correct in generals and incorrect in a number of particulars. One of his comments, in which he attempts to refute the Vaughan-Taxil anti-Masonic conspiracy, is indicative of other observations equally faulty. He writes: "I can find no Mason, of what grade or rite soever, who has ever heard of Pike's *Sephar d'Hebarim*, his book called *Apadno*, or lectures in which he imparted extracts unacknowledged from Eliphas Levi." He then implies that these works do not exist. As a Masonic historian and scholar, Mr. Waite should have known better.

Some years ago I secured a copy of *Sephar H'Debarim* (misspelled in Waite's quotation), by Albert Pike. An extremely-limited edition of this rare and curious work was published anonymously. Laid in is a letter from the custodian of books of the Supreme Council, Southern Jurisdiction, U.S.A., dated May 1, 1880, accompanying an errata slip in which Pike adds certain material to his text. The *Sephar H'Debarim*, or *The Book of the Words*, explains and defines terms used in the higher grades of Freemasonry, and the ethical implications are above reproach. Also, any consideration of the *Liturgies* and *Legendas* of the Scottish Rite prepared by Pike will prove that he was deeply indebted to Eliphas Levi. I am not acquainted with the book by this author titled *Apadno*, but considering the quantity of unpublished manuscripts conserved in the House of the Temple, it is quite possible that the work exists. This would seem to indicate that the tirades of Monsieur

Taxil and Miss Vaughan contain material of interest, if the facts can be divided from the miserable interpretations.

Incidentally, the *Sephar H'Debarim* opens with extensive extracts from the preface of a book titled *Long-Livers*, published in London in 1732. *Long-Livers* opens with the following greeting: "To the Grand Master, Masters, Wardens and Brethren of the Most Ancient and Most Honourable Fraternity of the Free Masons of Great Britain and Ireland, Brother Eugenius Philalethes Sendeth Greeting." The author of this preface cannot be identified with certainty, for the reason that he signs his remarks at the end, Eugenius Philalethes, Jun., F.R.S., March 1, 1721. The *junior* implies that he is not the original bearer of this pseudonym.

According to the Diana Vaughan-Leo Taxil account, the Hermetic adept, Thomas Vaughan, was born in 1612; reached London, and was initiated into the lower grade of the Rosicrucian Fraternity by Robert Fludd in 1636, and received from him a letter of introduction to the Grand Master, Johann Valentin Andreae, which he took to Stuttgart and presented a few months later. Vaughan returned to London and was present at the death of Robert Fludd in 1637. About 1640, he was advanced in the Rosicrucian Fraternity to the grade *Adeptus Minor* by Amos Komenski (Comenius), the same year that Elias Ashmole entered the Order. Vaughan presided over a Rosicrucian assembly, at which Ashmole was present, in 1644, and became Grand Master of the Rosicrucians in 1654. In 1667, he converted Helvetius, the celebrated physician of The Hague, who in turn became the head of the Rosicrucian Brotherhood. Vaughan also made two visits to America, published a number of works, edited others, and wrote *The Open Entrance to the Closed Palace of the King*. He departed from this vale of tears in 1678.

Although Waite pronounces the entire narrative to be a gross and planned imposture, we may wonder if emotion did not sway his judgment. Certainly some of the elements of the story were in circulation long before the advent of the 19th-century recension of the Luciferians. Our main problem is an effort to determine the place of Thomas Vaughan, tentatively identified with Eugenius Philalethes, in the Rosicrucian controversy. In this project, we cannot permit ourselves to be unduly influenced by the weight of traditional authorities. It is generally believed that the twin boys, Thomas Vaughan, the Hermetist, and Henry Vaughan, the mystical poet, were born in 1621 or 1622, although no register of births existed for the district at that time.

Mr. Waite\* is satisfied that the data recorded in *Athenae Oxonienses* is approximately correct. He considers this an important factor in discrediting the account given by Diana Vaughan. But let us look a little further. Dr. John Henry Cohausen, a German physician, left several literary landmarks indicating that he was a profound student of mystic alchemy. He was born in Hildesheim in Hanover, 1675, and died in 1750. Many substantial sources, including the *Bibliothèque Nationale*, have identified him as the anonymous author of *Hermippus Redivivus*, or *The Sage's Triumph Over Old Age and the Grave*. This is a most unusual book, the writer of which concealed carefully his large learning in the Hermetic tradition.

Dr. Cohausen refers to the English alchemistical artist, who disguised himself under the name of Eugenius Philalethes, as one of the most candid writers on alchemy. There is reference to the occasion when Philalethes attempted to sell a quantity of fine silver. The silversmith immediately told him that the ore had never come from the earth, but was the product of art. The embarrassed alchemist

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\*See *The Works of Thomas Vaughan*.



hastily retired, leaving the silversmith in possession of the valuable metal.

To quote Dr. Cohausen: "This famous man, who certainly was an adept, if ever there was one, led a wandering kind of life, and fell often into great dangers, merely from his possessing this great secret. He was born, as we learn from his writings, about the year 1612, and what is the strangest part of his history, he is believed by those of his Fraternity, to be yet living, and a person of great credit in Nuremberg, affirms, that he conversed with him but a few years ago.\* Nay, it is further asserted by all the Lovers of Hermetic Philosophy, that this very Philalethes, is the President of the Illuminated in Europe, and that he constantly sits as such in all their annual meetings."

Here the date 1612 is reported by a working alchemist almost contemporary with Vaughan, and we also learn from him that Vaughan was the head of the European Hermetists, and still alive at a great age. Mr. Waite gets himself into further complications in his biographical preface to *The Works of Thomas Vaughan*. Remember, Thomas Vaughan is supposed to have died in 1665; whereas the debated account of the Taxil contingency gives the date as 1678. The following ruminations of Mr. Waite are stimulating: "I must confess that imagination is disposed, on the other hand, to speculate whether Vaughan really died in 1665, whether he did not change his local habitation, adopting another pseudonym, as he had done once previously. A certain romantic coloring is reflected on such a notion by the fact that nothing was issued under the style of Eirenaeus Philalethes until Eugenius had been settled in his grave at Albury, according to rumor."

We now find the situation further confused by another obscure figure, who published important alchemical writings

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\*Cohansen wrote about 1720.

under the name Eirenaeus Philalethes, known as the Cosmopolite, native of England, and citizen of the world. This elusive adept has already been identified with Thomas Vaughan by some, and with George Starkey by others. It is important to bear in mind that Starkey graduated with an A.M. at Harvard University in 1646, and practiced medicine in the American colonies. He claimed to have come under the influence of the cosmopolitan adept about 1650, but Starkey seems to have been a man of unsound character, and, having appropriated to himself as much as he could of his Master's reputation and learning, afterward degenerated to the level of a charlatan.

The great text of the alchemical esoteric doctrine, *The Open Entrance to the Closed Palace of the King*, was issued under the name of Eirenaeus Philalethes. Miss Diana Vaughan claimed that this was written by Eugenius, and was first issued after his supposed death. The ever-obliging Mr. Waite informs us that in 1705 there was a German translation of *The Open Entrance, etc.* published at Hamburg, with the name of Thomas de Vagan as author. It is all very difficult, but there appears some justification for the report that Thomas Vaughan passed through the "Hermetic death;" that is, changed his identity, and, like others of his Order, left England and took refuge on the Continent.

If Eugenius and Eirenaeus are one and the same, the record left by George Starkey would sustain another detail of the Taxil version. Starkey's adept appeared in America at approximately the time Thomas Vaughan is reported to have visited the colonies. In the light of these indications, it is quite possible that Miss Vaughan's scholarship was more penetrating than her detractors would like to admit.

Our rather detailed examination of Thomas Vaughan serves more than one useful purpose. It reveals the circui-

tous course that must be followed in an effort to identify even one of the more-famous European adepts. Vaughan published many works, all revealing an extensive acquaintance with esoteric methods. The facts must have been known to a number of persons, including printers and publishers. It is more than a coincidence that Vaughan's secret has never been exposed. The machinery of concealment worked with such precision that we are forced to conclude that he was operating, not as an isolated truth seeker, but as one under the protection of a well-organized program.

Vaughan's writings show his intimate acquaintance with the great religious-philosophical institutions of antiquity. That he possessed mystical powers is proved by the entries in his private diary. He advocated the tenets of the Neoplatonists as against the teachings of Aristotle, and was inclined to the convictions of the cabalists. His lively controversy with Henry More, the Cambridge Platonist, showed his dissatisfaction with academic learning, which he regarded as hopelessly misleading for lack of spiritual content. Vaughan was widely read and deeply thoughtful, and on every occasion came to the defense of the Rosicrucian doctrines, though never outwardly claiming membership in the Fraternity.

As to the possibility that Vaughan took refuge on the Continent, we might quote a few lines from an old manuscript in the Bibliotheque Nationale. The manuscript is merely titled "Rose-Croix." "There are certain Protestant monks, previously of the order Cisteaux, living on a hill along the banks of the Danube, in an almost inaccessible place. . . . In that cloister is the rendezvous of the brothers, and the principal seat of their dwelling. The chiefs of their order never go out, and distribute to the others the commodities of life. All goods are common among them, and nothing is possessed in particular." Such retreats ex-



isted in several parts of Europe, and more than one suspected adept has disappeared into these secret and holy houses.

### *John Frederick Helvetius*

In 1667, John Frederick Helvetius, at that time practicing medicine in The Hague, published a short alchemical tract which he titled *Vitulus Aureus*, or *The Golden Calf*. Helvetius, who has been seriously slighted by the biographers, was physician to the Prince of Orange, and Caillet suggests that his true name was Schweitzer. He was born about 1625, and died in Holland in 1709. There is an early portrait of this learned doctor which presents him as a puritanical-looking person, definitely not handsome, but with the air of a man of solid religious principles.

Dr. Helvetius appears to be the only student of alchemy to record a personal visit from Elias the Artist, and it is on this account that the good doctor is most frequently mentioned. The circumstances are so extraordinary and the report is so evidently sincere as to require detailed examination. Dr. Ferdinand Maack has compiled a list of references to Elias the Artist which appeared in alchemical writings between 1750 and 1780.\*

Dr. Maack found no reference to Elias the Artist prior to Paracelsus. After him, Alexander von Suchten and Basil Valentine mention this Elias who is to come. In one place, Paracelsus, speaking of vitriol, adds: "What is small and humble, God has revealed, but the more important is still in the dark and shall likely remain so until the arrival of Elias Artista." There is also a prophetic statement in the same writings: "One shall come after me whose splendor is not yet in this life, and who shall reveal much." In the section on the "Physical Tincture," Paracelsus dwells at some length on the same theme: "Nothing is concealed that

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\*See *Elias Artista Redivivus* (Berlin, 1913).

shall not be revealed. There are many more secrets concerning the transmutation, though they are little known, for if they are revealed to someone their fame is not immediately common. With this art, the Lord bestows the wisdom to keep it secret until the advent of Elias Artista. Then shall be revealed what has been concealed."

Elias the Artist (Helias Artista) appears with sufficient frequency in the first cycle of Rosicrucian literature to deserve some consideration. He will be mentioned again later in this work, and his place in the descent of the esoteric tradition further considered. This Elias is Elijah, the prophet of Tishpeh, who was fed by ravens. Most important, he ascended to heaven in a chariot of fire, leaving his mantle to Elisha. He was associated with miracles and magic, and he emerges in early Jewish folklore as a culture hero. Like all such heroes, he takes on the attributes of adeptship. Julius Wellhausen, the German Biblical scholar, wrote of Elijah: "In solitary grandeur did this prophet tower conspicuously over his time; legend, and not history, could alone preserve the memory of his figure."\*

What better symbol could be advanced to conceal the proportions of the Hermetic adept than the dim, uncertain shadow of the magician-prophet who walked with God without the mystery of death? A work attributed to Helias Artista on the transformation of metals appeared in 1612, but the later writers appear to be considerably indebted to the brief reference in the works of Paracelsus. Albert Calliet notes of this Hermetic Elias: "This person is not always a disguised author as one could believe. In general he is believed to be the reincarnation of the prophet Elijah (prophesied by the Brothers of the Rosy Cross), who, as we know, did not die but ascended to heaven in a

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\*See *History of Israel*.

chariot of fire. This reincarnation has been the subject of numerous works of alchemy."

It appears to me from the treatment of the subject that a reappearance rather than a reincarnation is implied. Elijah, carried into the presence of the mystery of God, was to reappear at a certain time accompanied by signs and wonders. It was the burden of the Rosicrucian *Manifestoes* that the hour of the Universal Reformation had struck. There were portents in the heavens. The old prophecies were fulfilled, and the coming of Elias the Artist might reasonably be expected. Thus, Elias appears as the personification of the esoteric tradition and its adepts.

References to Elias the Artist divide into two definite groupings. According to one, he is the personification of a time and a circumstance—"a symbol of the ripeness of an age." He is the great day to come when all secrets shall be brought to light, "and things now rooting in the dark earth shall come forth to full growth and flower and bear a treasure, which is for the healing of the nations." According to the other, Elias is a definite person, and Paracelsus seems to take this attitude when he says that Elias "is not yet in this life." Elias thus becomes a John the Baptist, heralding the advent of the golden age. "This Elias Artista shall restore the true spagyric medicine of the old Egyptian philosophy which was lost over a thousand years. He shall bring it with him and show it to the world."\*

Dr. Glauber (1604-1668) enriched the sciences with several original discoveries, the most popular of which was a sodium sulphate ( $\text{Na}_2\text{SO}_4 \cdot 10 \text{H}_2\text{O}$ ), a cathartic, often called Glauber's salt in his honor. Glauber's devotion to his salt was as devout as was Bishop Berkeley's affection for his tar water. Even Elias the Artist be-

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\*Digested from the writings of Johann Rudolf Glauber.



comes involved in this miraculous remedy. Glauber's reasoning is most ingenious: "If you transpose the letters of Elias, they make the word *salia*, also out of the word Elisa you can make *salia*. These two words signify . . . that to the philosophers Elias Artista means the uncommon, and to the world still unknown, *salia*, through which great and unbelievable things can be accomplished. When the secrets of the *salia* are someday known to the world, then without doubt great changes will take place in the world. Great things shall be accomplished through that to the world unknown *Salia Artis* in *Philosophia*, *Alchemia*, and *Medicina Secretiori*. In the *Turba Philosophorum* it is clearly indicated that Elias Artista is to be considered as the *Sal Artist*."

It has been said that Glauber belonged to that group which was breaking away from the spiritual side of alchemy. To him, and to most who came after, alchemical symbolism was merely a blind to conceal the working principles of physical chemistry. His interpretation of Elias Artista is distinctly in the spirit of the moderns.

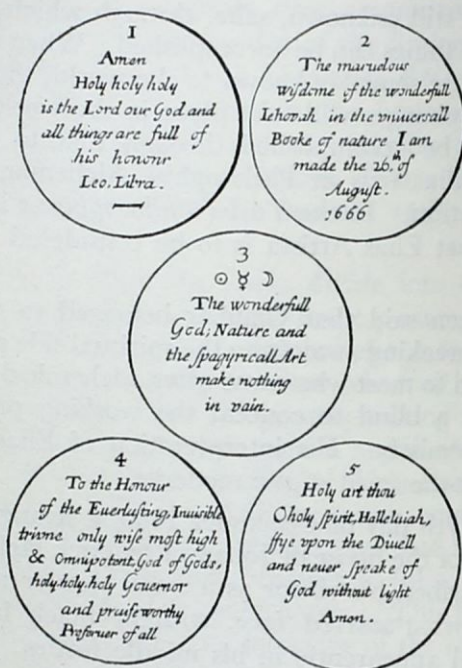
On the 27th day of December 1666, a stranger knocked at the door of the house of Johann Frederick Helvetius. The doctor described his visitor as a small slender man with a long, somewhat-scarred face, straight black hair, clean-shaven, and apparently in his middle forties. This "certain man" wore the plain, simple dress of a rustic, and particular mention is made of his muddy boots.\* Dr. Hel-

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\*One of the most extraordinary monuments of alchemy is the *Rotulum Hieroglyphicum Pantarvae Philosophorum*, which was compiled by George Ripley (d. circa 1490) or one of his disciples. The "Scrowle" was designed to be used for the initiation or instruction of neophytes in the Hermetic arts. Examples of this "Scrowle" are usually about twenty inches in width and twenty feet in length. They are elaborately colored and consist principally of a series of remarkable emblems. The "Scrowle" ends with a figure of the Hermetic adept, represented as a rustic reminiscent of a wandering Troubadour or jongleur. An engraved version of Ripley's figures was published by David Beuthers, guardian of the mint in Dresden, in his work, *Wahren Adepti, Universal und Particularia* (*True Adept, Universal and Particular*, Hamburg, 1718).

vetius was of the opinion that his visitor was a native of North Holland. The rustic-looking person, after a most civil salutation, chided the doctor for a tract which he had

D. 8. Pag. 16.



—From *The Philosophical Epitaph*

#### THE FIVE GOLDEN MEDALS OF ELIAS ARTISTA

These are exactly as described by Helvetius, except that the inscriptions have been translated into English.

written expressing certain doubts and reservations about the mysteries of higher alchemy.

In the privacy of Helvetius' study, the strange guest took from his belongings a cunningly-worked ivory box, which contained three large pieces of a substance resembling pale

yellow glass, explaining that with this amount of the Philosophers' Stone he could transmute twenty tons of base metals into pure gold. Later, from an inner breast pocket of his coat, the stranger drew forth five massive golden medals wrapped in a green silk handkerchief. These were inscribed with mystical words of adoration, and on one medal it said: "I am made the 26th of August, 1666."

In the house of Helvetius, this adept performed the transmutation, and presented his host with a tiny grain of the glasslike stone. With this minute particle, Helvetius himself transmuted metals in the presence of witnesses. He was visited on two occasions by the adept, who then disappeared from the community and was never seen again. In his *Vitulus Aureus*, Helvetius states definitely that the "rustic with the muddy boots" was Elias the Artist. A considerable part of the *Vitulus Aureus* is devoted to a dialogue between Helvetius and Elias. It is unnecessary for our purposes to publish the full account, so we will digest those parts in which Elias speaks of himself or of matters relevant.

The adept said that he was a close student of Nature's secret and delighted in the company of those of similar aim. He was not a physician, but a brass founder, who from earliest age had been devoted to the secret quality of metals. The Universal Medicine is called by the adepts "the great mystery of Nature." It does not lengthen life, but permits those who possess its power to complete the full term of their days, which is far longer than most realize. Elias kept the five medals in memory of his own Master, for he in turn had been instructed by a certain stranger, both in the philosophy and practice of the art. No torture or bribery could induce him to reveal the secret, yet he had given it to but one other person—an old, good man. Elias read but few books, but recommended the study of Sendivogius. He



then addressed Helvetius thus: "If you find grace in the sight of God, He will commission either me or some other adept of our art to unfold to you the right way of destroying the outward body of metals and seizing the inward vital life-giving soul."

Helvetius concludes the account of his experience in these words: "Thus I have unfolded to you the whole story from beginning to end. The gold I still retain in my possession, but I cannot tell you what has become of the Artist Elias. Before he left me, on the last day of our friendly intercourse, he told me that he was on the point of undertaking a journey to the Holy Land. May the Holy Angels of God watch over him wherever he is, and long preserve him as a source of blessing to Christendom!"\*

Bacstrom's diary extracted several formulas relating to antimony from the edition of the chemical writings of von Suchten published in Frankfurt in 1680. Included is a reference to an adept named Vieroort, who discussed the processes with Dr. Helvetius at The Hague. Dr. Helvetius is quoted as saying: "Elias Artista has confirmed me in the opinion of Paracelsus that by metals, through metals, and out of metals spiritualized and well purified the living Sophic gold or tincture for human and metallic bodies must be obtained." Bacstrom notes that Elias Artista personifies the spirit of life and the secret fire.

The unknown author of *Bibliographie Occulte* refers briefly to Elias Artista, the adept, as a great friend of Baron Emanuel Swedenborg. Elias deposited with Swedenborg more than three million francs worth of gold bars and ingots in the Bank of Hamburg, and the register of this bank

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\*The text of the *Vitulus Aureus* is available in the *Museum Hermeticum Reformatum*, etc., (Frankfurt, 1678), and in the English translation, *The Hermetic Museum Restored and Enlarged* (London, 1893). There is an early English translation in *A Philosophic Epitaph*, etc., published by W. C. Esq. (London, 1673). All these include reproductions of the medals.

has witness to the occurrence. So the mystery grows, and Elias the Artist remains the most spectacular of the elusive adepts of the Hermetic tradition.

### *The New Philosophy*

It is said that the age of modern chemistry began with Robert Boyle (1626-1691). Boyle was born the year that Francis Bacon is reported to have died, and was intimately associated with the Royal Society, which was dedicated to the extension of Bacon's scientific concepts. Boyle was the seventh and youngest son of Richard, Earl of Cork, and was born at Lismore in Ireland. He received his academic education at the University of Leiden in Holland, and afterward traveled extensively in France, Switzerland, and Italy. He settled in the University of Oxford about 1657, devoting his attention to experimental philosophy and chemistry. He frequented the Society of Virtuosi, which met in the lodgings of Dr. John Wilkins. After the restoration of King Charles II, this Society was enlarged to form the Royal Society, which will be discussed in the next part of this work.

Boyle has been described as "the greatest promoter of the New Philosophy of any among them,"\* referring in this instance to the members of the Royal Society. The disciples of modern chemistry like to assume that Boyle was emancipated from the chimera of alchemy and other superstitions which had dominated the speculations of his predecessors. The facts, however, scarcely support such conclusions, for this distinguished savant of the phlogistic theory was not only profoundly learned, but was also deeply devout. He was versed in Hebrew and other Oriental languages, and was a profound student of the Rabbinical writings. He was equally informed in the works of the

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\*See Fasti. Oxon., Vol. 2, by Wood, quoted by Bayle in his *General Dictionary*.

early Church Fathers, and has been called a true Master of the whole body of divinity. His capacities in mathematics, geography, navigation, history, and metalurgy are too well-known to require examination.

Dr. Peter Shaw\* was fully persuaded that Boyle believed in the possibility of the Philosophers' Stone, and the illustrious Dr. Edmund Halley questioned Boyle directly on the subject. The chemist declared that though he thought the grand elixir very difficult to be obtained, yet he did not imagine it impossible. In the *Philosophical Transactions* for February 1676, there appeared an article by Boyle, titled "An Experimental Discourse of Quicksilver growing hot with gold." Referring to alchemical transmutations in this article, Boyle wrote: "Thro' God's blessing, my trials afforded me positive proof about the year 1652." Boyle's stand in the *Philosophical Transactions* resulted in a lengthy letter from Sir Isaac Newton to the secretary of the Royal Society. Newton was courteous but skeptical. "I question not," wrote Newton, "but that the great wisdom of the noble Author will sway him to high silence, till he shall be resolved of what consequence the thing may be, either by his own experience or the judgment of some others, that thoroughly understand what he speaks about; that is of a true Hermetick Philosopher, whose judgment (if there be any such) would be more to be regarded in this point, than that of all the world beside to the contrary. . . ."

Newton, a fellow member of the Royal Society, was himself deeply immersed in mystical speculations. The catalogue of his library indicates his taste for alchemy, cabalism, and even astrology. The first English edition of the *Fama* and the *Confessio* of the Rosy Cross, with marginal notes in Newton's autograph, was offered for sale by an English bookdealer a few years ago. It is only fair, therefore, to

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\*In the general preface to his *Abridgement of Mr. Boyle's Philosophical Works*.



bear in mind that the transition from alchemy to chemistry was neither rapid nor abrupt. The New Philosophy of Bacon intensified the interest in scientific methods, but was not responsible for the drift toward materialism which dominated higher learning in the 18th and 19th centuries.

The material advancements in science and the social and political changes affecting the minds of men gradually obscured the sublimer parts of the Hermetic tradition. Alchemy ceased as a dynamic force, and the art passed from public notice. Investigation will prove, however, that the genuine exponents of the "new method" were also proficient in the old method. With them a division was taking place in their own minds. Spiritual convictions were coming to be regarded as private matters, and scientific convictions as public concerns. Discretion dictated this policy. The exponents of the "new method" were most intolerant of earlier doctrines and concepts. To be convicted of mental sympathy for the esoteric tradition was to hazard reputation and estate. It seemed more prudent, therefore, to follow the example of old Bishop Synesius of Alexandria, who conformed openly with the prevailing opinions, but remained a philosopher in the private parts of his own mind.

The European adepts, fully aware of the rising tide of social changes, "altered the place of their habitation;" that is, the vehicle for the perpetuation of their several purposes. The mystical-chemical Societies slowly disintegrated as the initiates quietly withdrew their guidance and support. The sciences had been launched in a straight, if narrow, way. A new emergency was inevitable. Human society must be prepared to receive the impact of a vast scientific program of physical accomplishment and its consequences. Skill without sufficient ethics could launch a monster of Frankenstein upon an unregenerate mankind—hence, the press-

ing need for immediate reforms in religion, politics, and economics.

Mr. Boyle had the ease and security provided by an adequate fortune. He further simplified his life by taking residence with his sister, for whom he had a deep attachment and who relieved him of all responsibility for the management of his establishment. This sister, Catherine, Countess of Ranelagh, was distinguished for her attainments and the generosity of her nature. It is said that she never engaged in any enterprise except for the good of others. Through her ministration, Boyle was able to pursue his researches with no personal interruptions for some forty years. For most scholars, however, the times were difficult and uncertain, and the advancement promised by science could not be generally enjoyed without a broad and deep program of social reformation.

The adept Fraternities, operating secretly both in Europe and in England, set up the machinery of what we shall call the Orders of Universal Reformation. Certain outstanding intellectuals, widely separated geographically, enjoyed a simultaneous change of mind. More correctly, we should say a simultaneous change, not of the substance, but of the direction of their thinking. Most of these ethical reformers had already gained distinction as alchemists and Hermetic philosophers. Many are known to have belonged to earlier Secret Societies. In their writings, the old symbols, emblems, and designs recur, but a new meaning is ascribed to each.

After about 1650, the literature of alchemy consists principally of reprints from earlier works or interpretations by those attempting to penetrate the obscure symbolism. After three hundred years, an interest in alchemical speculation has been revived by the findings of modern physicists and chemists. Sir William Ramsey, writing in 1904 on "Radium and Its Products," said: "If these hypotheses

[concerning the possibility of causing the atoms of ordinary elements to absorb energy] are just, then the transmutation of the elements no longer appears an idle dream. The philosophers' stone will have been discovered, and it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that it may lead to that other goal of the philosophers of the dark ages—the *elixir vitae*.<sup>28</sup>\*

The vindication of the Hermetic art is by no means unlikely. When this comes to pass, perhaps there will also be thoughtfulness for that high transmutation in the ethical sphere, which was the purpose of the Universal Reformation. Carl Jung has recognized that the symbols of alchemy are the characters of a language of the human unconscious. Through such figures, deep and abiding instincts and impulses rise to the surface of consciousness.

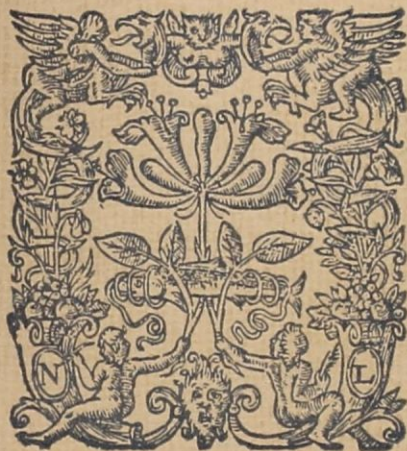
The opening years of the 17th century brought such an emergence. Deep mystical convictions pertaining to the eternal and internal nobility of man emerged through the ancient figures and emblems. The *Mutus Liber* (The Book Without Words) released a new degree of its secret meaning. The world moves. Men grow. Arts and sciences unfold. But the guardianship of the race must go on. Progress does not deny the old symbolism, nor does it exhaust the hidden meaning. The transmutation of metals prepared the way for the transmutation of man himself and all the institutions which he has devised. While physical chemists seek to bind the universe to the human need, the Hermetic adepts strive unceasingly to fit man to be a wise and faithful steward in the House of the Universal Mystery.

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\*See *Alchemy, Ancient and Modern*, by H. Stanley Redgrove.



By **MANLY PALMER HALL**



**Part Three**

**s Of Universal Reformation**

# THE ADEPTS

In the Western Esoteric Tradition

By MANLY PALMER HALL

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ORDERS OF UNIVERSAL REFORMATION

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This work is a section of a comprehensive survey of the adept tradition, which will be complete in fifteen parts. It is issued in the present form because of the unprecedented rise in the cost of book-production. Only in this way can the material be made available to students at a reasonable price.



# ORDERS OF UNIVERSAL REFORMATION

## FOREWORD

The alchemistical philosophers bridged the intellectual interval between ancient magic and modern science. During this important transition period, most chemists were also alchemists, most astronomers practiced judicial astrology, most mathematicians were devoted to Pythagorean speculations, and most physicists indulged in metaphysical abstractions. The social and political corruptions that burdened the age caused these progressives to apply their choicest analogies to the reformation of institutions and policies which impeded, by their reactionary tendencies, the advancement of essential learning.

Twentieth-century interpreters of 16th- and 17th-century esoteric foundations have, for the most part, ignored the circumstances which motivated the Secret Societies of that period. The natural fascination which results from the contemplation of occult lore disinclines the mind from such profane subjects as taxation without representation, the pauper laws, and imprisonment without trial. Only mature reflection, however, upon these urgent matters, makes it possible to estimate correctly the descent of the Secret Societies.

As regards the Rosicrucian controversy, I am fully aware that certain sects and persons will disagree with my stand. Each of the modern groups has its own record of the origin and descent of this Fraternity. I have purposely refrained from any discussion of these controversial accounts. I am familiar, of course, with those earlier works which contain pretentious pseudohistories, but it appears unwise to assume that unsubstantiated accounts are sanctified merely because they exist in print.

The esoteric tradition itself originated in the dim past, but this does not mean that Orders and Fraternities arising in the course of its unfoldment are coevil or coeternal with the parent stream. We do not, for example, assume that recent Christian sects are all nineteen hundred years old because they participate in a tradition that originated in the 1st century A.D.

As we have pointed out in the text of this section, all Secret Societies are dated by the internal evidence of their convictions and purposes. Each may find inspiration and comfort in the doctrines of older groups, and some may seek to gain credit and authority by claiming kinship with ancient and honorable names. We are all indebted to the past, but always we interpret earlier teachings in terms of present needs and requirements. At one period in Freemasonic development, an effort was made to re-establish the Egyptian Mysteries of Isis and Osiris. The revival, although ingenious, could not deceive, even for a moment, a trained Egyptologist. He could tell instantly that the old rites and rituals were restated to justify concepts and unfold viewpoints completely unknown in the days of the Ptolemies.

The Orders of Reformation could not have come into existence before the advent of Luther, and they all reveal a deep indebtedness to the "new method" expounded by Descartes and Bacon. Obviously, the roots of the "new method" were deep in ancient earth, but the flower and the fruit with which we are concerned adorned the Protestant *mentorgarten*.

A dynamic factor in the rise of 17th-century mystical Orders was the era of exploration that led to the colonization of the Western Hemisphere. The Utopians drew heavily upon the psychological effect of the New World and its impact upon European provincialism. The time

was at hand for the public statement of principals suitable to ensure a new order of living in a new world. It is also worth noting that the Humanist Orders emerged at the very time when the spirit of revolution was abroad in the land, and when England was entering a century of profound political agitation. These several elements were parts of one picture, if our frame is large enough to include them.

The adept turned from his symbolical forges and retorts, crucibles and alembics, to assume the appearance of the social and political philosopher. The astrologers directed their telescopes and other instruments toward the earth, and began calculating the ascending and descending of nations and States. This does not mean that the esoteric tradition lost its spiritual implications, but the time had come to apply the eternal truths to the enlargement of the human condition.

In this section of our outline, we are seeking the landmarks of the Great School and its initiates during that era of transition which led directly to the great social experiment in the Western Hemisphere. A vast, comparatively uninhabited continent was available in which men might build a house of brotherhood according to the will of the Great Architect of the Universe. The ages of secrecy were drawing to a close; the statement of the divine plan was possible; the Invisible Empire, long sung by the poets, could at last build its house upon the physical rock.

A secret machinery which had been held in readiness for centuries was put in motion. The disciples of the Esoteric Orders throughout Europe, the Near East, and even distant Asia were called to their appointed tasks. The bell had rung, and the wits gathered.

Because various Societies, devoted to the same cause, appeared spontaneously in different places, the unity of the project passed unnoticed. Today we would suspect



immediately a common origin of common policies, but such was not the mind of that time. Each manifestation was treated as a local symptom. In a way this was fortunate, because the reactionaries were satisfied to devote their attention to these local symptoms, thus accomplishing a minimum of results with a maximum of effort.

The purpose we are attempting to accomplish with this study of the adept tradition is to encourage penetrative thinking. We invite the reader to examine the parts of an intricate pattern for himself, and to assemble them by becoming sensitive to those submerged forces which hold the key to the riddle.

MANLY PALMER HALL

Los Angeles, California; April 1949.

It was not until the 18th century, with its emphasis upon the miraculous, that the Brothers of the Rosy Cross lost their sober habits and emerged in the extravagant habiliments of magic and mystery. There are certain reasonable questions about the doctrines of the Rosy Cross that may never be reasonably answered. Would-be historians have built elaborate assumptions and hypotheses upon vague and conflicting intimations; but in spite of all pretensions to the contrary, the secrets of the original Society have been neither exposed nor revealed.

There is every indication that the Rosicrucians should be included among the early Humanists. Certainly they advocated the reformation of society, universal education, and the rights of man. In achieving a general definition, the details are comparatively unimportant. All human institutions divide into two groups: Either they advocate a doctrine of special privileges, thus favoring some entrenched class, or else they advocate a doctrine of equal opportunity, in this way seeking the general improvement of mankind. The Humanists were champions of the cause of equal opportunity through the enlargement of knowledge. The *Fama* of the Rosy Cross definitely aligns the Order with those practical utopians of every age who have labored in the threefold cause of liberty, equality, and fraternity.

The Humanists inherited the unfinished labors of the heretics, who preceded them as champions of human rights. After the Reformation, the Orders of the Quest gradually took on a new appearance; they became the Orders of the Great Work. Prior to the Reformation, the Philosophical Empire was concerned principally with the survival of knowledge. Once, however, the backbone of ecclesiastical authority had been broken and the power of the Church

2. The restoration of those ancient mystical and philosophical systems, by which humanity could be inclined toward a state of mutual understanding and spiritual integrity. This phase of the program included a purification of all existing faiths and a restatement of the primitive and universal religion.
3. The enlargement and perfection of the arts, by which the power of beauty could be released as a civilizing force.
4. The political reformation of States toward a philosophic commonwealth, the end to be: one nation, one people, one faith, and one work. The illusion of competition was to be dispelled by the reality of a magnificent program of co-operation.
5. The creation among the learned of a permanent organization dedicated to essential progress, devoted to all branches of useful knowledge, and capable of providing a perpetual incentive for human progress.
6. The maintenance of whatever degree of secrecy necessary to protect those dedicated to progress from the persecutions instigated by reactionaries, and from those desiring to enslave men for personal power and profit.
7. The accomplishment of all reformation without such revolutions as endanger the life and property of the private citizen. The principal instrument of the reformation was to be education. The wise man cannot be enslaved, and the ignorant man cannot be freed.
8. The end should be the application of all tradition, experience, and knowledge to the perfection of the human state and estate. The Great Work was the perfect adjustment of human purpose with the divine



plan, through the understanding of the laws of Nature and the practice of an enlightened code based upon the threefold foundation of philosophy, science, and religion.

Naturally such a comprehensive project could not be brought into a state of objective existence without a deep-laid plan and a long-range program. A machinery must be set up capable of surviving the vicissitudes of social change over vast periods of time. It would be most unlikely that any generation would voluntarily accept the whole design or dedicate itself to the immediate accomplishment of such a reformation. The first step was to inform the private citizen of his personal potentials. He must see himself as capable of attaining to a state of security; he must then be educated to desire such a state, and lastly, he must be supplied with the practical means for attaining his newly envisioned purpose. In substance, this was the program of Humanism. And through such secret assemblages as the Rosicrucians, this vision of the shape of things to come was introduced to an astonished world unaccustomed to think beyond the desperate emergencies of the moment.

The fact that outstanding alchemists, astrologers, and metaphysical philosophers are among those suspected of membership in the original Rosicrucian Order must not be used as the basis for too large a generalization. These Transcendentalists were the outstanding liberals of their time, and were by nature inclined to serious thinking. Such men had the abilities and capacities most likely to advance a liberal program of idealistic education and research. Each also had a considerable sphere of influence and the means of contacting other progressives in the several arts and sciences. Some in all probability also belonged to esoteric

organizations already functioning, and through such connections could spread the new tidings throughout Europe. It required serious men for a serious undertaking. The groups dominated by the Church and State, and this included the universities, belonged with the reactionaries. The orthodox schools, scientific and theological, were persecuting all liberals. The astrologers, cabalists, and alchemists were the heretics of science; and heresy is often synonymous with progress.

Formal institutions, dominated by conservative traditions then as now, had no practical solution for the prevailing corruptions and injustices. They devoted much of their energy to attacking liberals and discrediting unorthodox theories and practices. Recruits for the Philosophic Empire had to be drawn from that stratum of brilliant minds which had rejected scholastic authority. These truth seekers, realizing that accepted methods had failed, were seeking in the esoteric traditions of antiquity for the lost keys of operative wisdom.

It should also be remembered that the alleged Rosicrucians were really identified only as apologists, and not as actual members of the Fraternity. They wrote tracts and a few longer works endorsing the objectives of the brethren of the Rosy Cross and offering themselves to its service. It would be unwise to assume that the Society practiced all the convictions of these applicants and supplicants. Intellectuals of every class made bids for membership, and included Catholics, Protestants, Jews, adventurers, soldiers, artisans, physicians, and lawyers. But as not one of these would-be joiners had any actual knowledge of the Fraternity or its teachings, their notions, apologies, explanations, and interpretations cannot be accepted as conclusive evidence of anything except their own zeal.

If the rose of the Troubadours became the crucified rose of the Rosicrucians, the Society was attempting to accomplish a transmutation in the world of learning. Man could not be free until he developed the capacity to practice freedom. Equality cannot be bestowed; it must be earned. To be earned, it must be available; and to be available, it must be preserved from the antisocial forces bent upon the enslavement of the human mind. Although the Rosicrucians remained unknown, the very rumor of the existence of the Order caused widespread consternation among reactionaries of every station and conviction.

Those with uneasy conscience developed appropriate phobias. Some feared that the Knights Templars had returned to haunt their executioners. The blood that had been shed by the Inquisition cried out for vengeance. Torture, disgrace, and death had not destroyed heresy, and the ghosts of martyrs wandered about in the night pointing accusing fingers at the men, the institutions, and the doctrines responsible for the enslavement of countless millions. It was not alone the strength of the Fraternity of the Rosy Cross which made this Order appear so formidable; rather it was the weakness of guilty men, who knew that they deserved a heavy punishment for their misdeeds.

It is not our intention to imply that the Rosicrucians were simply political reformers. The project which they prepared required profound knowledge of spiritual sciences and breadth of vision possible only to those internally enlightened. It seems unwise, however, to regard them merely as theosophical or alchemistical philosophers dedicated to abstract speculation about God, Nature, and man. If we may believe their apologists, the adepts of the Society were the custodians of a secret science of human regenera-



organizations already functioning, and through such connections could spread the new tidings throughout Europe. It required serious men for a serious undertaking. The groups dominated by the Church and State, and this included the universities, belonged with the reactionaries. The orthodox schools, scientific and theological, were persecuting all liberals. The astrologers, cabalists, and alchemists were the heretics of science; and heresy is often synonymous with progress.

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If the rose of the Troubadours became the crucified rose of the Rosicrucians, the Society was attempting to accomplish a transmutation in the world of learning. Man could not be free until he developed the capacity to practice freedom. Equality cannot be bestowed; it must be earned. To be earned, it must be available; and to be available, it must be preserved from the antisocial forces bent upon the enslavement of the human mind. Although the Rosicrucians remained unknown, the very rumor of the existence of the Order caused widespread consternation among reactionaries of every station and conviction.

Those with uneasy conscience developed appropriate phobias. Some feared that the Knights Templars had returned to haunt their executioners. The blood that had been shed by the Inquisition cried out for vengeance. Torture, disgrace, and death had not destroyed heresy, and the ghosts of martyrs wandered about in the night pointing accusing fingers at the men, the institutions, and the doctrines responsible for the enslavement of countless millions. It was not alone the strength of the Fraternity of the Rosy Cross which made this Order appear so formidable; rather it was the weakness of guilty men, who knew that they deserved a heavy punishment for their misdeeds.

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According to the old documents, the Brothers possessed a "key;" that is, a method, a practical program for the accomplishment of a definite and particular end. The true substance of this method they did not reveal, but it was certainly a kind of discipline which could be applied to both the individual and the collective. Traces of such a discipline are to be found in the writings of the initiated philosophers of antiquity, and the discipline itself is still preserved in the esoteric religions of Asia.

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### *The Rosicrucian Adepts*

The Society of the Rosy Cross, which came into prominence in the early years of the 17th century, presented unusual difficulties to historians of that period. Although Rosicrucianism exercised a considerable sphere of influence and an extensive bibliography has accumulated relating to the subject, there are few facts available either about the Society itself or its individual members. If we may depend upon its apologists as writing from some participation in the activities of the Order, the Rosicrucians merit inclusion in the adept tradition. Unfortunately, it is impossible to distinguish with certainty any of the inner circle or sovereign body of the Brotherhood.

The names most often associated with the original Society are: Johann Valentin Andreae, a Lutheran theologian; Robert Fludd, an English doctor, and Count Michael Maier, a German intellectual, man of letters, and physician to Emperor Rudolph II. Although these men did not claim actual membership in the Society, this circumstance

is not in itself conclusive negative evidence. Each in some way directly identified himself with Rosicrucian projects, and sought to advance the objectives of the Order.

Andreae, in his autobiography which was published posthumously, acknowledged that he was the author of the *Fama Fraternitatis R. C.*, the original proclamation of the Brotherhood. He wrote a number of curious works, most of which appeared anonymously. These included his *Christianopolis* which will be discussed in our section dealing with Utopias. Fludd was the principal apologist of the Rosicrucians in England, and his writings defended the existence and high motives of the Society. He also compiled an extensive history of the Rosicrucians. This book is scholarly but casts very little light on the Brotherhood. Maier visited England about 1616, and seems to have known and collaborated with Fludd, although historical details of such intimacy are lacking. Maier wrote a small book, now exceedingly rare, setting forth the laws and rules of the Rosicrucians. With the exception of a few cryptic remarks, however, this precious volume is disappointing. The Count's references to Rosicrucianism in general are scattered through several erudite volumes, illustrated with curious symbols and dealing principally with alchemy.

If Andreae, Fludd, or Maier were initiates of the Rosicrucian Society, they exhibited rare modesty and reticence about their affiliations. They were certainly extraordinary men versed in obscure arts and sciences, and conversant with esoteric doctrines of antiquity. As they are the outstanding examples of the general obscurity which shrouds Rosicrucianism, and most writers have assumed that these men were adepts of the Order, we shall consider them as the most likely candidates for this high honor.

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The first proclamations of the Rosicrucians did not appear in printed form until 1614, and within a year a number of vigorous opponents had arisen motivated by a variety of prejudices. These Sophists sought by every means in their power to vilify and destroy the mysterious Society. As not one of these adversaries had ever met or even seen, so far as he knew, a Brother of the Order, the attacks were of necessity directed against such statements of doctrine and policy as were contained in the original manifestoes—the *Universal Reformation*, the *Fama Fraternitatis R. C.*, and the *Confessio*.

The printer's ink on the *Fama* and the *Confessio* was scarcely dry before Andrew Libau, or Libavius, the principal of a college in Coburg, had two ponderous folios in good Latin, loaded with abuses against the Brotherhood, ready for the press. Under the gentle heading of "well-



meaning reflections," he points out from their own texts that the Rosicrucians advocated broad reforms in education, religion, and government. It was, therefore, the Christian duty of God-fearing men to accuse the Brothers of R. C. of inciting disrespect for the ancient, honorable institutions of learning, stirring up rebellion against lawful governments, the preaching of heresy, and the practice of sorcery. For some reason not entirely clear, Libavius did not follow in the pattern of his fellow critics, most of whom denied catagorically the very existence of the elusive Brotherhood. Equally strange was his sudden change of heart, for in 1616 Libavius shifted his position completely, and earnestly advised all who had the opportunity to join the Society. He died the same year, and his motives have never been clarified.

### *The Secret Master of the Rosy Cross*

The true identity of the mysterious person referred to as "Our Illustrious Father C. R. C." is one of the deepest mysteries of the esoteric tradition in Europe. According to the *Fama* and *Confessio* of the Rosicrucians, he was born in Germany in the year of our Lord 1378; received his early education in a monastery; journeyed to the Near East when sixteen years old; was initiated by Mohammedan adepts at Damcar (Damascus?); returned to his own country, and built the house called *Sancti Spiritus*; called three religious Brothers from the cloister where he had spent his youth, and these four together founded the Fraternity of the Rosy Cross.

Later these Brothers increased their number to eight by initiating four others. Of these eight, seven were German, and the other apparently English. They prepared six rules which they swore to obey. One of these rules specified

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of the Society, a small door was discovered bearing an inscription in Latin, which translated read, "In 120 years I shall come forth."

When the vault was opened it was found to be brilliantly illuminated by a mysterious lamp burning in the ceiling. Beneath an altar decorated with brass plates was found a body, presumably that of Father C.R.C., perfectly pre-

immediately a common origin of common policies, but such was not the mind of that time. Each manifestation was treated as a local symptom. In a way this was fortunate, because the reactionaries were satisfied to devote their attention to these local symptoms, thus accomplishing a minimum of results with a maximum of effort.

The purpose we are attempting to accomplish with this study of the adept tradition is to encourage penetrative thinking. We invite the reader to examine the parts of an intricate pattern for himself, and to assemble them by becoming sensitive to those submerged forces which hold the key to the riddle.

MANLY PALMER HALL

Los Angeles, California; April 1949.



# THE ADEPTS

## ORDERS OF UNIVERSAL REFORMATION

### *The Secret Teachings of the Rosicrucians*

Although it is believed generally that the Brothers of the Rosy Cross were theosophists and mystics, very little is known about their esoteric doctrines. Contrary to popular opinion, the members of the Fraternity never made a formal statement of their teachings, and no satisfactory account with reasonable claims to validity is known to exist. Because important names identified with the early activities of the Society are also associated with astrology, alchemy, cabalism, and classical philosophy, it has been assumed that the Rosicrucians were devoted to such speculations. Actually, the manifestoes of the Order do not convey the impression that these elusive brethren were addicted to any branch of popular metaphysics.

The burden of the original proclamations is one of a broad reform covering art, science, religion, and politics. The means by which this reform was to be accomplished was through the codification of knowledge and the preparation of a universal textbook of encyclopedic proportions. Religious references, strongly influenced by Protestantism, are for the most part pious and orthodox, conveying the impression that the Society was devout and conservative. The Lutheran flavor is attributed to the activities of Andreae.

It was not until the 18th century, with its emphasis upon the miraculous, that the Brothers of the Rosy Cross lost their sober habits and emerged in the extravagant habiliments of magic and mystery. There are certain reasonable questions about the doctrines of the Rosy Cross that may never be reasonably answered. Would-be historians have built elaborate assumptions and hypotheses upon vague and conflicting intimations; but in spite of all pretensions to the contrary, the secrets of the original Society have been neither exposed nor revealed.

There is every indication that the Rosicrucians should be included among the early Humanists. Certainly they advocated the reformation of society, universal education, and the rights of man. In achieving a general definition, the details are comparatively unimportant. All human institutions divide into two groups: Either they advocate a doctrine of special privileges, thus favoring some entrenched class, or else they advocate a doctrine of equal opportunity, in this way seeking the general improvement of mankind. The Humanists were champions of the cause of equal opportunity through the enlargement of knowledge. The *Fama* of the Rosy Cross definitely aligns the Order with those practical utopians of every age who have labored in the threefold cause of liberty, equality, and fraternity.

The Humanists inherited the unfinished labors of the heretics, who preceded them as champions of human rights. After the Reformation, the Orders of the Quest gradually took on a new appearance; they became the Orders of the Great Work. Prior to the Reformation, the Philosophical Empire was concerned principally with the survival of knowledge. Once, however, the backbone of ecclesiastical authority had been broken and the power of the Church

to destroy utterly all nonconformists had been lost, the heretics emerged as Humanists. The essential doctrine remained the same. It was still the heresy of the Manichaeans, the Albigenses, and the Troubadours, and the adversary was not completely discomfited. Neither the Church nor the State was in a position to preach a crusade, but each did everything possible to impede the progress of intellectual liberalism. It was still necessary to maintain a degree of secrecy, especially regarding *means*, but it was possible to speak more emphatically about the *ends* to be accomplished.

The metaphysical-minded have completely overlooked the social and political aspects of Rosicrucianism, but we shall never understand the Society correctly until we recognize its place as an agent of the intellectual revolution. Having accomplished its purpose, the original Society seems to have been absorbed in the very stream of progress which it had helped to release. When the reforms it advocated were generally accepted and applied, the original Fraternity vanished completely from the theater of European affairs. The later mystical groups using the same name do not seem to have been able to establish their descent from the original body.

When we penetrate the aura of metaphysical speculation which has surrounded the Society for nearly three hundred years, we find that the Rosicrucians were dedicated to a practical and necessary program, which can be summarized as follows:

1. The renovation of all human knowledge, with emphasis upon the discovery of causes. Learning to be dedicated to the security of all men, and not to remain merely a plaything for the amusement and amazement of the mind.



2. The restoration of those ancient mystical and philosophical systems, by which humanity could be inclined toward a state of mutual understanding and spiritual integrity. This phase of the program included a purification of all existing faiths and a restatement of the primitive and universal religion.
3. The enlargement and perfection of the arts, by which the power of beauty could be released as a civilizing force.
4. The political reformation of States toward a philosophic commonwealth, the end to be: one nation, one people, one faith, and one work. The illusion of competition was to be dispelled by the reality of a magnificent program of co-operation.
5. The creation among the learned of a permanent organization dedicated to essential progress, devoted to all branches of useful knowledge, and capable of providing a perpetual incentive for human progress.
6. The maintenance of whatever degree of secrecy necessary to protect those dedicated to progress from the persecutions instigated by reactionaries, and from those desiring to enslave men for personal power and profit.
7. The accomplishment of all reformation without such revolutions as endanger the life and property of the private citizen. The principal instrument of the reformation was to be education. The wise man cannot be enslaved, and the ignorant man cannot be freed.
8. The end should be the application of all tradition, experience, and knowledge to the perfection of the human state and estate. The Great Work was the perfect adjustment of human purpose with the divine



plan, through the understanding of the laws of Nature and the practice of an enlightened code based upon the threefold foundation of philosophy, science, and religion.

Naturally such a comprehensive project could not be brought into a state of objective existence without a deep-laid plan and a long-range program. A machinery must be set up capable of surviving the vicissitudes of social change over vast periods of time. It would be most unlikely that any generation would voluntarily accept the whole design or dedicate itself to the immediate accomplishment of such a reformation. The first step was to inform the private citizen of his personal potentials. He must see himself as capable of attaining to a state of security; he must then be educated to desire such a state, and lastly, he must be supplied with the practical means for attaining his newly envisioned purpose. In substance, this was the program of Humanism. And through such secret assemblages as the Rosicrucians, this vision of the shape of things to come was introduced to an astonished world unaccustomed to think beyond the desperate emergencies of the moment.

The fact that outstanding alchemists, astrologers, and metaphysical philosophers are among those suspected of membership in the original Rosicrucian Order must not be used as the basis for too large a generalization. These Transcendentalists were the outstanding liberals of their time, and were by nature inclined to serious thinking. Such men had the abilities and capacities most likely to advance a liberal program of idealistic education and research. Each also had a considerable sphere of influence and the means of contacting other progressives in the several arts and sciences. Some in all probability also belonged to esoteric

organizations already functioning, and through such connections could spread the new tidings throughout Europe. It required serious men for a serious undertaking. The groups dominated by the Church and State, and this included the universities, belonged with the reactionaries. The orthodox schools, scientific and theological, were persecuting all liberals. The astrologers, cabalists, and alchemists were the heretics of science; and heresy is often synonymous with progress.

Formal institutions, dominated by conservative traditions then as now, had no practical solution for the prevailing corruptions and injustices. They devoted much of their energy to attacking liberals and discrediting unorthodox theories and practices. Recruits for the Philosophic Empire had to be drawn from that stratum of brilliant minds which had rejected scholastic authority. These truth seekers, realizing that accepted methods had failed, were seeking in the esoteric traditions of antiquity for the lost keys of operative wisdom.

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If the rose of the Troubadours became the crucified rose of the Rosicrucians, the Society was attempting to accomplish a transmutation in the world of learning. Man could not be free until he developed the capacity to practice freedom. Equality cannot be bestowed; it must be earned. To be earned, it must be available; and to be available, it must be preserved from the antisocial forces bent upon the enslavement of the human mind. Although the Rosicrucians remained unknown, the very rumor of the existence of the Order caused widespread consternation among reactionaries of every station and conviction.

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### *The Secret Master of the Rosy Cross*

The true identity of the mysterious person referred to as "Our Illustrious Father C. R. C." is one of the deepest mysteries of the esoteric tradition in Europe. According to the *Fama* and *Confessio* of the Rosicrucians, he was born in Germany in the year of our Lord 1378; received his early education in a monastery; journeyed to the Near East when sixteen years old; was initiated by Mohammedan adepts at Damcar (Damascus?); returned to his own country, and built the house called *Sancti Spiritus*; called three religious Brothers from the cloister where he had spent his youth, and these four together founded the Fraternity of the Rosy Cross.

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of the Society, a small door was discovered bearing an inscription in Latin, which translated read, "In 120 years I shall come forth."

When the vault was opened it was found to be brilliantly illuminated by a mysterious lamp burning in the ceiling. Beneath an altar decorated with brass plates was found a body, presumably that of Father C.R.C., perfectly pre-



served, and attired in the vestments of the Order. After examining the contents of the strange room, in which was stored many rare books and manuscripts, the Brothers sealed the vault again and, renewed in spirit, went their respective ways.

As the result of this singular occurrence, and according to the will of Father C. R. C., the Brothers then prepared their *Fama* or manifesto, which they sent forth in five languages to the nations of Europe, inviting all sincere souls longing for a reformation of human society to communicate with the Order which would receive and consider these messages regardless of how they were sent.

This is the substance of the strange story as given in the manifestoes published in 1614. No earlier historian or mystic mentions Father C.R.C., and no subsequent writer adds anything substantial to the account. The narrative itself gives no details by which any of the circumstances can be checked. Three hundred years of conscientious research have failed to discover any evidence corroborating the narrative as it appears in the *Fama*. Certain discrepancies in the story, however, give cause for thoughtfulness. For example, it is stated that writings by Paracelsus were found in the vault where the Master of the Rosy Cross was buried. If C. R. C. died at the age of one hundred and six, and the tomb was sealed at that time and not opened for one hundred and twenty years, we come upon a historical difficulty. The vault must have been sealed in the year 1494, at which time Paracelsus was one year old, scarcely at the prime of his literary career. It is also definitely stated that the *Fama* was published in five languages, but only copies in German and Dutch were issued prior to the English translation of 1652. The Brothers also promised that they would communicate with qualified candidates, but the

hue and cry following the publication of their manifestoes was due to the unbroken silence of the Brothers, who answered no messages so far as is known, either publicly or privately.

In 1616 the *Chymische Hochzeit* (*Chemical Marriage of Christian Rosencreutz*) was published anonymously. This work is an alchemical fantasy, and the hero, who wins his spurs by becoming a Knight of the Golden Stone after sundry adventures, in no way resembles the Father C. R. C. of the *Fama*, nor does the text imply such an identity. Entirely without proof, most modern writers have assumed that the similarity between the cryptic letters standing for the master in the manifestoes and the name given in the *Chymische Hochzeit* is sufficient evidence that the initials C. R. C. stand for Christian Rosencreutz, and that this was the true or esoteric pseudonym of the Rosicrucian adept. In reality, this alleged solution only complicated the situation. The Lutheran theologian, Johann Valentin Andreae, admitted to having written the *Chymische Hochzeit* as a satire upon alchemy when he was sixteen years old.

Maurice Magre, in his *Magicians, Seers and Mystics*,\* presents some curious research relating to the identity of Father C. R. C. He says that the wise man who became the celebrated and elusive Master of the Rosy Cross, under the symbolical name of Christian Rosencreutz, was the last descendant of the German family of Germelschausen and flourished in the 13th century. The castle of Germelschausen stood in the Thuringian forest on the border of Hesse. The proprietors of this castle were grim, sullen men, who venerated an idol of worn stone and practiced a religion combining Christian beliefs and pagan superstitions.

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\*Published in England under the title, *The Return of the Magi*.

The castle was besieged by Landgrave Conrad of Thuringia, and the whole family, which had embraced the mystical doctrines of the Albigenses, was put to death, except the youngest son. This boy, only five years of age, was carried away secretly by a monk, who was an Albigensian adept from Languedoc. The lad was placed in a monastery which had already come under the influence of the Albigenses. Here he was educated, and made the acquaintance of the four other brothers later to be associated with him in the founding of the Rosicrucian Fraternity. Unfortunately, Magre gives no authority or reference to support his account, implying that he derived it from oral tradition.

The Frater Christian Germelschausen of Magre's account presents extraordinary difficulties to the conscientious historian. The pious Brother flourished at a time when genealogical records were extremely vague. He lived in an area about which little is known, belonged to a family supposed to have become extinct in the 13th century, and was saved secretly by the intercession of an unknown, unnamed man. Such uncertainties are insuperable, especially when no hint, intimation, or vestige of such a tradition is preserved in the available works attributed to members or apologists of the Fraternity. Magre further complicates prevailing confusion by intimating that the account of Father C. R. C. given in the *Fama* is a late invention by persons unacquainted with the original facts.

Until some evidence acceptable to sober scholars is forthcoming which proves that the Rosicrucians as a Fraternity of that name existed prior to the 17th century or, at the earliest, the closing years of the 16th century, it seems advisable to withhold judgment on this delicate subject. The internal evidence of the manifestoes would indicate that the doctrines of the Brotherhood were identified with the trends of the modern world rather than of the medieval



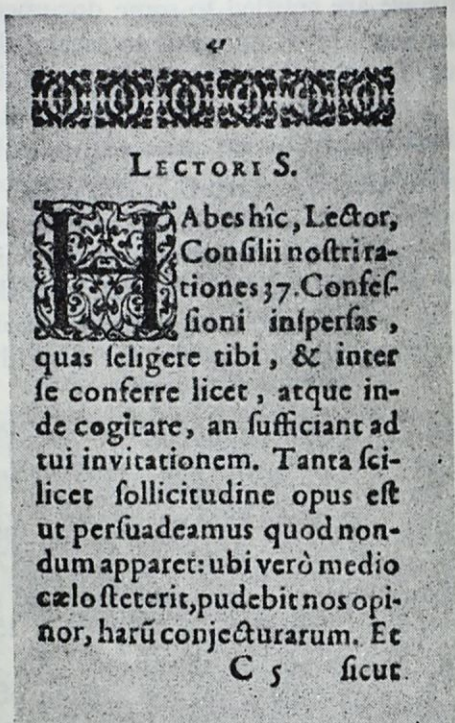
period. The fortuitous substitution of one legend for another at this late date and the casual manner in which Magre presents his account seem to give cause for mental reservation. Certainly we are entitled to some documentation or further explanations. It is impossible to escape the reasonable conviction that the Fraternity's guiding spirit was a contemporary genius, and not a man sleeping in a hidden tomb for one hundred and twenty years.

There are three early statements in print which may help to solve this curious enigma. As neither of these brief notes appears in books usually associated with Rosicrucian literature, they have come to light in connection with another field of research. As both of these references point in the same direction, they should be given "a solid kind of thought."

*The Anatomy of Melancholy*, a delightful conglomeration of choice fragments of wisdom, wit, experience, and observation, ran through several editions between 1621 and 1660. The author signed himself Democritus Junior, and the work is now attributed to Robert Burton (1577-1640). Democritus Junior (Burton?) was much indebted to a book called *A Treatise of Melancholie* (London, 1586), by Timothy Bright, the father of shorthand. In fact, the later *Anatomy* is practically a revised edition of Bright's opus. An unknown author may, therefore, be involved who published his original treatise when Burton was only nine years old.

Each of the early editions of *The Anatomy* differs slightly from the others, and the last revisions made during Burton's lifetime are to be found in the printing of 1651. These revisions were made after the edition of 1638. On page seventy-five of the introduction to *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, the adept of the Rosy Cross is called the Theo-

phrastian Master, "reformer of the world, and now living." This means that C. R. C. must have been alive in the first half of the 17th century.\*



#### FOREWORD TO THE *CONFESSIO FRATERNITATIS*

In this edition published in Cassel by Wilhelm Wessel, 1615, with the *Confessio* in Latin, note that the first two lines of text contain the familiar ABCON (BACON) acrostic, usually found in works associated with Lord Bacon's Secret Society.

The Lutheran theologian, Johann Valentin Andreae, previously mentioned, has long been accepted as the man responsible for the *Fama* and *Confessio* of the Rosicrucians.

\*See *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, 7th edition (London, 1660).

In the same edition of *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, introduction, page 62, Andreae is mentioned in an extraordinary footnote, thus: "Joh. Valent. Andreas, Lord Verulam." Consider the punctuation and its inevitable implication. Lord Verulam was the proper title of the greatest philosopher of his age, Francis Bacon. Throughout *The Anatomy* the "Rosy Cross Men" are regarded as a group of utopian reformers, seeking to advance the cause of learning.

John Wilkins, D.D., Bishop of Chester, was a moving spirit in the Royal Society of London. This group of scholars acknowledged itself as being patterned upon Bacon's concept and design for the ordering of human knowledge. Although the Royal Society was not incorporated until 1662, with Wilkins as its first secretary, a detailed program for such a Society is to be found in the *Commentaries or Transportata*, among Bacon's manuscripts in the British Museum.\*

Dr. Wilkins published a little work called *Mathematical Magick*. On page 237 of the 1680 edition of this treatise, as part of a discussion of subterranean lamps, appears the following: "Such a lamp is likewise related to be seen in the sepulcher of *Francis Rosicross*, as is more largely expressed in the confession of that fraternity." This is the only instance known in literature in which any part of the Rosicrucian adept's real name is given. Of course, Francis is Bacon's Christian name. Thus it comes about that England's High Chancellor may be definitely involved in the Rosicrucian riddle.

Mr. W. F. Wigston† points out that the spirit of Rosicrucianism reveals a deep philosophical program for the renovation of religion, philosophy, science, and art. Its

\*See *Francis Bacon and His Secret Society*, by Mrs. Henry Pott.

†See *Bacon, Shakespeare and the Rosicrucians* (London, 1888).



purposes were identical with the acknowledged aims of Francis Bacon. Either two men with precisely the same motives and an equal degree of brilliance flourished at the same time, one totally obscure, or one man was responsible for the two interrelated projects. It is not my intention to force this point at this time, merely to indicate the direction in which mature thought naturally turns.



Early portrait of Andreae from the *Turbo*, published in  
"Helicone near Parnassus, 1616."

### *Johann Valentin Andreae*

Although his writings are for the most part dreary reading, Johann Valentin Andreae was a dynamic thinker and an ardent humanitarian. He was born in 1586, the son of Johann Andreae, who was Dekan at Herrenberg and later Abt von Königsbronn. The boy's life was deeply influenced by his mother, a devout and gentle soul, who inspired her son to the selection of a religious career. He was educated in the University at Tübingen, where he became an outstanding linguist, perfecting himself in Latin,

Greek, Hebrew, French, Spanish, Italian, and English. He was an extensive reader and a profound student of mathematics, studying with Maslin, the teacher of Kepler. In 1614, Andreae published a series of lectures on mathematics.

Andreae left Tübingen without completing his course of studies, and spent a number of years visiting intellectuals in various German cities. His visit to Switzerland influenced his entire life. He was deeply impressed by the social condition of the Swiss people, and might have settled in the country but for his violent dislike of Calvinism. He held offices in the Lutheran communion, and when called to Calw as Dekan and Spezialsuperintendent, he attempted social reforms based upon the Swiss pattern. He founded a mutual protective association among the workmen of the cloth factories and dye works, supported by voluntary contributions of his parishioners and friends. The organization continues to this day and is now well-endowed.\*

In his *Vita*, Andreae describes his impressions of Swiss morality and ethics. His remarks are fervent if a trifle stuffy. "When I was in Geneva, I made a notable discovery, the remembrance of which and longing for which will die only with my life. Not only is there in existence an absolutely free commonwealth but as a special object of pride a censorship of morals in accordance with which investigations are made each week into the morals and even into the slightest transgressions of the citizens. . . . What a glorious adornment—such purity of morals—for the Christian religion! With our bitterest tears we must lament that this is lacking and almost entirely neglected with us; and all right-minded men must exert themselves to see that such is called back to life."

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\*See *Christianopolis, an Ideal State of the 17th Century*; translated from Latin, by Johann Valentin Andreae, with a historical introduction by Felix Emil Held.

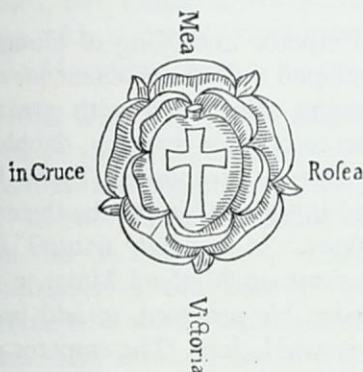
In spite of disastrous wars which impoverished him financially and resulted in the destruction of his library and art collection, Andreae's sincerity and unquestioned ability were recognized. In 1639, he was appointed Court Chaplain and Spiritual Counsel of the Landgrave of Hesse, later Protestant Prelate of Adelberg, and Almoner of the Duke of Wurttemberg, and died in the respect of all men in 1654 at the age of 68.

There is little in the life of Andreae to link him with so dramatic and metaphysical a movement as the Rosicrucians, yet he acknowledged himself to be the author of the *Fama* and the *Confessio Fraternitatis*, and his name has also been linked closely with the *Chemical Marriage of Christian Rosencreutz*, first published in 1616. It should be remembered, however, that Andreae was a great admirer and loyal follower of Luther. He felt the need of a further general reform of society. It was to be a two-fold program: back to Luther and forward with Luther. Andreae, though essentially a pedagogue, mingled his religious convictions with educational, scientific, and political ideals. He was much broader than Luther, and recognized the importance of progress in secular fields. If the *Fama Fraternitatis* is by Andreae, he outlines in this work a model for a college or society of intellectuals, who, through the advancement of all forms of learning, should institute a "general reformation" of the whole civilized world. Andreae, in his *Menippus*, admits that he made use of round-about methods and strategies in an effort to inspire a sincere love for Christian ideals. In the introduction to his *Christianopolis*, he recognized two classes of persons: the first, those who admire and defend conditions as they exist; and the second, those who bear patiently the burdens heaped upon them, but who sigh continually for an



improvement of society. The devil is forever persuading Christians that no further efforts are necessary.

At the time of the publication of *Christianopolis*, Andreae had not acknowledged any part in the preparation of the Rosicrucian manifestoes. He refers to the Order, however, in a veiled manner. Recently, according to his introduction, a so-called *Bruderschaft* was suggested, whose teachings were exactly the reform that the world needed. The Brotherhood caused a great disturbance among those corrupt persons, who feared the overthrow of their profitable tyrannies. When it was discovered that the *Fraternitatis*



18TH-CENTURY ROSICRUCIAN EMBLEM

This symbol appears to be based upon one used by Martin Luther.

was secret and could not include the world in general, a praiseworthy man called out, "Why do we wait for the coming of such a fraternity? Let us rather make a trial ourselves of that which seems good to us." Andreae agreed with this concept and suggested the possibility of the forming of a national community devoted to utopian ideals.

Luther's symbol was a heraldic rose containing a heart with a cross in its center. Andreae's crest was a St. Andrew's cross with four roses between the arms. These

devices may have influenced the selection of the name and peculiar symbol of the Rosicrucians.

Although Andreae mentions the Society only occasionally during the early period of the controversy, it is evident from his statement in the *Vita* that he had an intimate knowledge of its origin. He was not the type of man who would be given to idle jests or impostures, so we are entitled to suspect that he was a party to the original project and worthy of greater consideration than he has received generally.

### *Michael Maier*

Rudolph II, Emperor and King of Hungary and King of Bohemia, developed quite a penchant for celebrities and his court at Prague scintillated with great names. His majesty was given to obscure learning, dabbled in alchemy, and invited the Dutch astronomer, Tycho Brahe, to cast his horoscope and introduce him to the theory and practice of judicial astrology. It was only natural, therefore, that Rudolph should summon Michael Maier, a man who had made all knowledge his province, to add further luster to the Rudolphian constellation. The emperor was so pleased with Maier's gentility that he promptly ennobled him, bestowing the title Pfalzgraf—Count Palatine—and appointing him private secretary to his royal person.\*

It is not usual that scholars addicted to the Hermetic arts receive much consideration from historians or biographers. These sober chroniclers reserve detailed examination for respectable and conservative scientists, theologians, and politicians. Even the date of Maier's birth is not known with certainty, but it is estimated that he was born in 1568 at Rendsburg in Holstein, of a substantial if not noble

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\*See *Count Michael Maier*, by J. B. Craven, D. D.

family. He seems to have graduated in medicine from the University of Rostock, but he never settled to the sober practice of this profession.

Maier developed an early interest in alchemy, but his motives were scientific rather than mystical. He was not especially interested in manufacturing gold for his own use, but he certainly was intrigued by the chemical problems which alchemy suggested. Like many seekers after the secrets of the divine art, he was imposed upon by pseudo adepts who had discovered that the simplest way of making gold was to extract it from the purses of the gullible. Nothing daunted, our Pfalzgraf recovered from each deception in turn with a deeper resolution to discover the substance of the *Magnum Opus*.

It was not until after his visit to England in 1615 that Maier emerged as an apologist for the Rosicrucians. In general, his defenses and explanations were similar to those of Dr. Fludd. In 1617 Maier published his *Silentium Post Clamores*. In this he emphasizes, without actual proof, that the manifestoes of the Society were genuine and authentic. Those who would approach the rose must first bear the cross. The Brothers of R. C., for some reason doubtless good and sufficient, failed to answer the numerous, letters and pamphlets written to them and for them, but after all many are called, yet few are chosen. Doubtless, the worthy would be accepted after the five years of probation. If the Rosicrucian Order chose to remain silent after the stir caused by its first manifestoes, it followed the example of the philosophical institutions of antiquity. Maier was of the opinion, however, that it would be better if the Society revealed its purposes more clearly, thus solving the reasonable doubts of sincere persons—including his own.



The following year Maier launched another small volume entitled *Themis Aurea, the Laws of the Fraternity of the Rosie Crosse*. This is largely a series of commentaries on the six rules of the Society as originally set forth in the *Fama* and *Confessio*. The treatment is wordy and non-eventuating, but there are a few cryptic statements indicating that Maier may have become party to some facts. The Reverend Dr. Craven summarizes the contents of the book thus: "In the 'Themis,' the Brethren of the Rosy Cross appear merely as specially amiable and virtuous medical practitioners, who, having either by tradition inherited, or by devotion and a peculiar astrology discovered certain



—From *Themis Aurea*, by Maier  
AN ANAGRAM

Maier explains that as the princes of the world have their hand seals, so the Brethren of R. C. should not be deficient, and ingenious persons are invited to examine and interpret this, their device.

medicines, are ready to treat the diseased with these, gratis, out of love to mankind. They, too, appear as possessing a certain strength of moral virtue, a natural religion which makes men whom they counsel and befriend noble and virtuous. In short, they are merely a society of men, 'very laborious, frugall, temperate, secret, true.' ""\*

Count Michael continued to include references to the Rosicrucians in his later writings, of which the *Verum*

\*See *Count Michael Maier*, by J. B. Craven, D. D.



*Inventum* is the most important. This book summarizes the contributions of the German people to the progress of society in general. The last section is devoted to Germanic discoveries in chemistry, and the Rosicrucians are introduced as meriting universal esteem. Maier again stresses the actual existence of the Brothers of R. C., quoting his own previous works as proof. The Brothers have sacrificed their own comfort and happiness to advance the arts and sciences, and their Society "is the very asylum of piety."

About the only information we have on the life of Maier is supplied by the publication dates of his books. Some modern scholars opine that he never found any genuine Rosicrucian adepts, and finally established a Society of his own which he advanced as the genuine Order, but this seems inconsistent with the obvious sincerity of the Count's nature. None of his writings, however, indicate that he suddenly came into any profoundly esoteric knowledge. It is possible that he was initiated in the closing years of his life. Maier died in 1622 in the Lutheran faith, and was known to have practiced extensive charities. He died peacefully, certain of the resurrection.

### *Robert Fludd*

The distinguished English metaphysician, Robert Fludd, Esquire (Robertus de Fluctibus), doctor of medicine, was born in Kent in 1574, the fifth son to survive of Sir Thomas Fludd. Dr. Robert insisted upon using Esquire with his name, because he believed that the honor of a good family was to be accounted superior to a degree bestowed by a university. Incidentally, he received his M.A. at St. John's College, Oxford, in 1598. He devoted the next six years to a grand tour of the Continent. He then returned to England, and secured his doctorate in medicine at Christ



Church, Oxford, in 1605. He had considerable difficulty, however, in securing his fellowship in the College of Physicians. He was examined three times before final acceptance, probably because the dignitaries of the College suspected the candidate of having a sickly interest in mysticism and the occult arts.

Fludd practiced medicine in London at the same address for the greater part of his life, and gained considerable distinction for his methods of therapy which would be regarded now as verging toward psychology. He insisted that the virtues of his medications must be supported by a noble and right-minded attitude on the part of the patient. This eccentric doctor maintained a pretentious establishment, and was sufficiently successful to permit him to engage a private apothecary who kept shop on the premises. Emphasis upon spiritual considerations attracted to Dr. Fludd many sufferers who had been given up by other practitioners, and with these cases he was remarkably skillful. Most of his numerous and lengthy writings were dictated, at odd moments between appointments, to an amanuensis, whose principal duty was to be present or available at any hour of the day or night.

Dr. Fludd is remembered mostly for his voluminous books in scholarly Latin, and illustrated with curious figures and symbols derived from anatomy, astrology, numerology, music, comparative religion, and the cabala. His curious little work entitled *The Squeezing of Parson Foster's Sponge* gained him some reputation as a controversialist, and, while possibly the least of his writings, is one of only two works to be published in English. The good doctor occupied a strange place in the mental life of his day. He was one of those men born out of time—in this case, too late. His thoughts were concerned principally with subjects and con-

cepts which had disappeared from the public favor. About his only contribution to the furtherance of science was his early research with the barometer, and to the time of his death he stood firmly with Kepler on the wrong side of the controversy over the Copernican system.

When Dr. Libavius published his diatribes accusing the Rosicrucians of attempting to overthrow organized society, he aroused the indignation of many generous scholars and idealists, including Dr. Fludd. This good physician summoned his amanuensis and dictated immediately a lengthy apology for the Rosicrucians, entitled *Tractatus Apologeticus Integritatem Societatis De Rosae Cruce Defendens*.<sup>\*</sup> The book was first issued in Leiden in 1617 because the printers on the Continent produced better work at lower prices than those in England. While it is evident from the text that Fludd was not at the time a member of the Order, he championed its cause against the attacks of Libavius with sincerity, dignity, and a deep, reverent admiration. Then, fearing that he might have said something in his well-intentioned defense to displease the Society, Fludd appended to his *Tractatus Apologeticus* a concluding address somewhat in the form of a letter. In this he wrote: "I desire nothing more fervently than to be the least in your Order, so that I may be able to satisfy the curious and hungry ears of men through worthy and dependable propagation and expansion of your honor and fame." If any man of his generation were worthy to be accepted into the house *Sancti Spiritus*, it was amiable, learned Robert Fludd.

Although Fludd's writings abound with concepts and precepts believed to be essentially Rosicrucian, only one

<sup>\*</sup>The *Tractatus Apologeticus* is an enlargement of a smaller work published the previous year, and was later translated into German by Adam Virkholtz in 1779.

other work associated with his name deals directly with the Fraternity. This consists of fifty-four pages in folio, titled *Summum Bonum*, usually bound at the end of his *Sophiae Cum Moria Certamen*, published in Frankfort in 1629. The *Summum Bonum* bears no author's name and its title page is ornamented with an engraving of an open rose.

The fourth section of this essay attempts to describe the dwelling place of the Brothers of the Rosy Cross. Needless to say, the description is entirely symbolical. The adepts of the Order abide in the house of God, of which Christ is the cornerstone. The temple stands upon the mountain of wisdom, and its dome is supported by those reborn men who have become living pillars in the "everlasting house." As further evidence, there is appended to the work a letter written by one of the Brothers of R. C. This letter discusses the immovable palace of the Society which is in the center of all things, "... the resplendent and invisible castle which is built upon the mountain of the Lord, out of whose root goeth forth a fountain of living waters, and a river of love." Although it is not certain that Fludd was the author of the *Summum Bonum*, he is fathered with it as the most likely suspect.

The relationship of Count Michael Maier to Fludd's spiritual life has been much discussed. This distinguished German visited England about 1615. Some assume that he was an emissary of the Rosicrucians, and initiated Fludd. Others advance the theory that Maier himself was seeking initiation from the English doctor. The latter seems the more probable, for in spite of all appearance to the contrary, Rosicrucianism almost certainly originated in England, and migrated to the Continent in search of suitable publishers for its manifestoes and writings.



The Reverend J. B. Craven, who devoted many years of research to the subject, summarizes his own findings and those of most other investigators, thus: "That a Society of the nature of the Rosy Cross existed, and that both Maier and Fludd were initiates, need not, I think, be now doubted by any disinterested students of the history of those wondrous sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. What its origin may have been, we shall, I suppose, never know with any certainty, though there is some ground for supposing that it was in existence in the latter part of the eighteenth century. Its whole story is one of the most curious episodes in history."\*

It is regrettable that so little is known about the private life of Robert Fludd. According to the *Dictionary of National Biography*, he died, unmarried, on the eighth of September 1637, in the house where he had practiced medicine for nearly thirty years. He was buried at Bearsted Church, and his grave was marked by a stone which he had personally prepared before his death. The following year his nephew erected a monument consisting of a figure of Fludd at a desk, with an open book before him. In recent years, members of the English Rosicrucian Society—a research group with no roots in antiquity—have made pilgrimages to this shrine. Fludd was without doubt the greatest of the English mystics, a man of wonderful insight and a devoted child of the Church of England.

### *Jakob Boehme*

There has been considerable controversy about the place of Jakob Boehme (1575-1624) in the adept tradition. There is a report that he was baptized into the Rosicrucian Society in 1612, but no evidence meaningful to the impartial

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\*See Dr. Robert Fludd, the English Rosicrucian, etc.

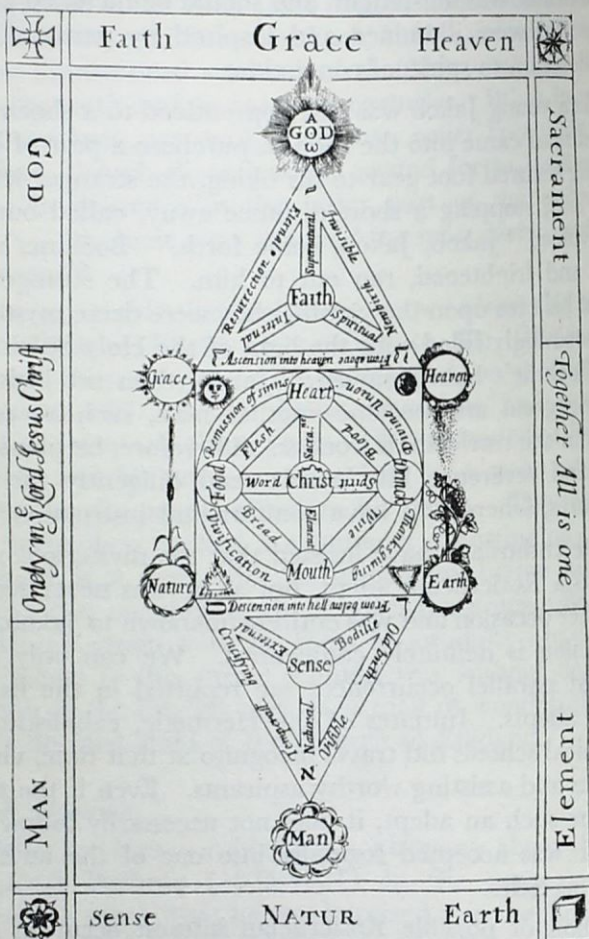
scholar has been advanced in proof of this account. It appears more likely, from the writings of the mystic and such biographical material as may be regarded as authentic, that Boehme was self-taught, and should be included among those who were illumined and inspired by personal piety and devotion to spiritual convictions.

When young Jakob was still apprenticed to a shoemaker, an old man came into the shop to purchase a pair of boots. Having secured foot gear to his liking, the stranger left the store and, stopping a short distance away, called out in a loud voice: "Jakob, Jakob, come forth." Boehme, astonished and frightened, ran out to him. The strange man turned his eyes upon the youth—they were deep, mysterious eyes, seemingly filled with the light of the Holy Spirit. He took Boehme's hands, saying: "Jakob, thou art little, but shall be great and become another man, such an one as at whom the world shall wonder. Therefore, be pious, fear God, and reverence His Word; read diligently the Holy Scriptures, wherein ye have comfort and instruction."

Some enthusiasts have insisted that the mysterious stranger was a Rosicrucian adept, but as he was never seen on any other occasion and was entirely unknown to Jakob, such an opinion is definitely conjectural. We can only point out that parallel occurrences are reported in the lives of known adepts. Initiates of the Hermetic, cabalistic, and alchemical schools did travel incognito at that time, visiting disciples and assisting worthy aspirants. Even if the stranger were such an adept, it does not necessarily follow that Boehme was accepted formally into one of the authentic Secret Societies.

Symbols of possible Rosicrucian interest occur in some editions of Boehme's writings published after his death. These, however, cannot be regarded as conclusive proof of

his Rosicrucian affiliations, as he borrowed extensively from many systems of esoteric speculation in his search for terms, figures, and devices appropriate to the unfoldment



—From Boehme's *Mysterium Magnum*  
THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST

A cabalistic design including two examples of conventional rose-form devices.



of his own peculiar doctrine. None of his associates or early editors and translators made reference to his membership in any secret Order, although such an intimation would have advanced Boehme's prestige to a marked degree. All efforts to identify him with mystical Fraternities are of comparatively recent date.

Boehme's literary output consisted of about twenty works, long and short. All are bound together by a general pattern of doctrine. None of his larger writings were published during his lifetime, but many of his manuscripts were circulated privately among a small circle of enthusiastic followers. This circle never assumed the proportions or dimensions of a Fraternity, and we cannot learn that he imposed any regulations or restrictions upon those wishing to study his writings. He requested discretion because of the antagonism of the local Lutheran clergy, and was reticent to permit his manuscripts to be long out of his own possession. He feared that they would aggravate his enemies, who resented a shoemaker having opinions on theological matters.

Shortly before his death, Boehme prepared a key to his writings. This consisted of a table of principles intended to co-ordinate the terms which he used and the general scheme of his revelations. Even this table, however, was not sufficient to clarify for the layman the more recondite of his metaphysical speculations. Perhaps had he lived longer he might have realized the need for a simple summary of his abstruse doctrines, but he died soon after completing his table of principles.

Boehme was an outstanding example of the difficulties almost inevitable whenever a mystic attains a high degree of internal illumination without an adequate foundation in the philosophical disciplines practiced by initiate-philosophers. He had no way of organizing the revelations which

flowed outward through his personality. He lacked even the words essential to the clear presentation of his ideas. He had no formal background with which to meet the bigotry and antagonism of the contemporary theologians. His devotion and integrity are beyond question, but he suffered numerous difficulties and misfortunes, and was forced to waste much precious time and energy defending himself and his principles from the attacks of small minds.

The disciplines of the Mystery Schools were devised to bestow a degree of self-sufficiency, and the facilities of an Invisible Empire of initiates and their disciples were available to those who voluntarily associated themselves with the adept Fraternities.

It should not be supposed that the Mystery Schools were attempting to reserve knowledge for themselves or their members because of selfish motives. Experience has shown beyond any possible doubt that anyone desiring to serve and educate humanity must have at his disposal certain internal resources, which only discipline can render available. The work of the teacher is extremely difficult at best, and without proper guidance disaster is almost inevitable. One must not only possess the internal knowledge and understanding, but must also have the discrimination to know what can be taught, who is teachable, and the proper time at which instruction can accomplish the greatest good. The undisciplined idealist is almost certain to develop a disastrous overenthusiasm, which destroys perspective, creates or intensifies obstacles, and frustrates the reasonable ends of action.

There is also the important element of co-ordinating effort. When the individual is aware of a large purpose and is uniting his efforts with others motivated by the same unselfish principles, there is greater accomplishment than

is possible when the isolated enthusiast is guided only by his own benevolent but often impractical instincts. It is quite within the range of probabilities that the uninitiated mystic will unintentionally come into conflict with the program of the very teachers whose work he desires to advance. He has no way of knowing the direction in which the great schools are operating unless he is, at least to a degree, a party to their program.

Some may feel that the initiate-teachers themselves should inform the sincere individual, share their program with him, and accept him into their company without the disciplines and obligations which are normally required. Unfortunately this is not possible, for the enlargement of consciousness cannot be transferred, but must be attained by the actual participation in the rules and regulations of the sanctuary. The esoteric doctrines are not imposed upon the disciple, but are released through him as he refines his consciousness according to the laws of the Secret Schools. There is only one proper door to the sheepfold, because that door is actually the science of human regeneration. Until the truth seeker chooses, from the realization of his own insufficiency, to enter by this door and voluntarily to accept the guidance of the Great School, it is powerless as an institution to protect him or advance his cause.

Occasionally, through the natural integrity of personality and motives, a mystic, like Boehme, attains to a participation in those divine laws normally beyond the comprehension of the profane. Socrates was another outstanding example of a self-taught teacher. The internal wisdom of the men is a magnificent testimony to the potential human achievement, and their dedication to the unselfish service of their fellow creatures is admirable. Socrates refused initiation because he felt that it might limit his



ability to communicate his ideas to others. He did not wish to have his lips sealed by an oath. His very sincerity, however, was a liability rather than an asset. It remained for his disciple, Plato, an initiate bound by the obligations of the Mysteries, to perpetuate the wisdom of his uninitiated Master.

Boehme's mystical Christianity attracted the attention of Johann Georg Gichtel (1638-1710), whom Mme. Blavatsky, well-qualified to speak on these matters, refers to as "an Initiate and Rosicrucian."\* It is not possible to study the life of Gichtel and the description of his illumination, which appears in the *Theosophia Practica*, Vol. 7, without realizing that he is delivering a veiled account of his acceptance into the Esoteric School. Thus Gichtel becomes a Plato to the German Socrates, and under his supervision the extraordinary diagrams and illustrations were added, and Boehme's mystical revelation was incorporated into the adept tradition.

Inevitably the uninitiated illuminate is drawn toward the porch of the temple. As his vision enlarges and his understanding deepens, his human doubts about the wisdom of the esoteric descent are dispelled by the experiences of his consciousness. He comes to realize that an eternal plan is operating in the world, and that the greatest good to the greatest number is attained by gentle submission to the rules and regulations of those sacred institutions which have labored unselfishly for the good of man for thousands of years.

### *The Second Cycle of Rosicrucian Apologists*

The general excitement caused by the original publications of the Society and the resultant controversy began to

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\*See *Lucifer*, Vol. 3, p. 131.

subside after 1620. No further documents that could reasonably be attributed to the Brothers were forthcoming, and the cycle closed on a note of frustration.

Between the years 1650 and 1665 there was a considerable revival of interest, principally as the result of the activities of three men. The first of these men was the universally-learned Sir Elias Ashmole, a distinguished patron of alchemists, astrologers, and mystics, and the author of several books pertaining to these subjects. In the *Prolegomena* of his *Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum*, published in 1652, he states that I. O., "one of the first four Fellows of the Fratres R. C.," cured the young Earl of Norfolk of leprosy. Ashmole infers that this Brother I. O. was of English birth. There is reasonable evidence that Elias Ashmole was initiated into the secrets of the Philosophers' Stone and, therefore, a legitimate exponent of the esoteric tradition.

The second intriguing personality of this era was Eugenius Philalethes, tentatively identified as Thomas Vaughan. This author published several mystical and alchemical works and translated the *Fame* and *Confession* of the Rosicrucians into English for the first time. Eugenius entered into quite a literary controversy with Henry More, the Cambridge Platonist. He retaliated to More's bitter attack with a small volume, the title of which is a classic, *The Man-Mouse Taken in a Trap and Tortur'd to Death for Gnawing the Margins of Eugenius Philalethes*. Thomas Vaughan was an alchemist and practical chemist, and died as the result of an accident in his laboratory.

The triad is completed by John Heydon, who has been the subject of considerable speculation. F. Leigh Gardner, late Hon. Secretary *Soc. Ros. in Anglia* and a distinguished bibliophile, passes the following judgment on Heydon: "On

the whole, from the internal evidence of his writings, he appears to have gone through the lower grades of the R. C. Order and to have given out much of this to the world.”\*

Several of Heydon's books include the word *Rosicrucian* in some form, either in the title or on the title page. His most important references to the Society occur in *The Rosie Crucian Infallible Axiomata* (London, 1660), and in *The Holy Guide* (London, 1662). The second publication is partly a reissue of the earlier work. Heydon also claimed that he had translated the mysterious book, *M*, the most secret writing of the Rosicrucians, and issued it under the title, *The Wise Man's Crown* (London, 1664). The text however, does not entirely fulfill this pretension.

John Heydon was the first to link Francis Bacon directly with the Rosicrucians. He reissued Bacon's *New Atlantis* almost word for word, inserting Rosicrucian references at convenient places in the text. He must have known that the appropriation of so celebrated a writing would be immediately detected. It is possible that the project was undertaken by authority. Heydon claims to have received certain inspirations from his relative, Sir Christopher Heydon, whom he describes as a “Seraphically Illuminated Rosie Crucian and learned astrologer.” Sir Christopher had written a scholarly defense of judicial astrology. John Heydon, who signed himself “A Secretary of Nature,” included a lengthy biographical introduction in most of his larger books, but it cast little light upon the problem under consideration.

The sixth book of *The Holy Guide* bears the impressive title, *The Rosie Cross Uncovered, and the Places, Temples, Holy Houses, Castles, and Invisible Mountains of the Brethren Discovered and Communicated to the World for the*

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\*See *Bibliotheca Rosicruciana* (London, 1923).



*Full Satisfaction of Philosophers, Alchymists, Astromancers, Geomancers, Physitians, and Astronomers.* As usual the contents of the book fail to justify the title, but there are a few fugitive references to the theme under consideration. The Rosicrucians are defined as "a divine Fraternity that



—From *The Holy Guide*, by Heydon  
JOHN HEYDON, GENT.

A servant of God and a secretary of Nature

inhabits the Suburbs of Heaven, and these are the Officers of the *Generalissimo* of the World, that are as the eyes and the ears of the great King, seeing and hearing all things: they say these *Rosie Crucians* are seraphically illuminated, as *Moses* was, according to this order of Elements, Earth refin'd to Water, Water to Air, Air to Fire. So of a man

to be one of the *Heroes*, of a *Hero* a *Daemon*, or good *Genius*, of a *Genius* a partaker of Divine things, and a Companion of the holy Company of unbodied Souls and immortal Angels, and according to their Vehicles, a versatile life, turning themselves, *Proteus*-like, into any shape."

This ascent of men through wisdom to a divine estate is in the spirit and almost in the exact words of Plotinus and other prominent Neoplatonists. The concept obviously originated in the Pythagorean and Platonic interpretations of the Orphic theology.

Heydon then summarizes the story of Father C. R. C. as given in the *Fama*, adding certain embellishments of his own. In the midst of his learned and leading observations, he then complicates the situation by saying: "I am no *Rosie Crucian*." In his paraphrase of the *Fama*, Heydon inserts: "And there is another Vault or Habitation of the Brethren in the West of England, and there is recorded all the New Testament, and every Chapter explained." Later in the work, he adds: "At this day the *Rosie Crucians* that have been since Christ, say, their Fraternity inhabits the *West* of England; and they have likewise power to renew themselves, and wax young again, as those did before the birth of Christ, as you may read in many Books."

This reference seems to imply that the Brotherhood had endured in the west of England since the beginning of the Christian era. Almost certainly this is an effort to tie Rosicrucianism with the Christian foundations at Glastonbury, which were established in the 1st century. Our author is following a well-established if unfortunate precedent by using the term *Rosicrucian* as a synonym for mysticism in general.

Heydon enlarges the subject of the English vault or castle, explaining that it is in the earth and not on the earth. This

subterranean retreat has many rooms and chambers filled with precious and wonderful treasures. Several pages are devoted to a detailed description of the English vault, but the text consists principally of superlatives. Heydon refers to the head of the Order as Father Fra. R. C. I. A. It is not clear whether he intends *Fra.* as an abbreviation for *Frater* or, as John Wilkins used it, as an abbreviation for Francis. The combination of *Frater* with Father is also unusual and is not found in the conventional texts. As Heydon emphasizes the English vault of the Brotherhood, the R. C. I. A. could reasonably stand for *RosiCruciana In Anglia*. Little else of importance occurs in this section of *The Holy Guide*, but the work should be read carefully by those seeking stray hints and intimations.

After 1665 all interest in the Rosicrucian controversy appears to have vanished from the public mind. It was not revived until nearly a hundred years later, at which time it was associated rather intimately with Freemasonic speculation. Little new was added, and from a literary standpoint the resurrection was merely a rehashing of old claims and pretensions. The oracle of the Rosy Cross spoke once in 1614, and thereafter was forever silent.

### *The Nursery School of Humanism*

Before unfolding the cycle of the Utopias, it may be well to examine somewhat critically the motives underlying the 17th-century recension of esoteric philosophy. Between the years 1550 and 1650 there was an extraordinary revival of interest in obscure arts and sciences. This revival included the rescuing of many ancient authors from comparative obscurity, extensive revisions of earlier texts, elaborate commentaries on older works, and a number of original productions. These were distinguished for the extravagance



of their intimations and implications, and the remarkable designs and figures which often embellished their texts. While some of these productions were obviously fabricated to cater to the prevailing public taste, many were reverent, sincere, and scholarly. Numerous books and tracts which appeared during this recension dealt apparently with astrology, alchemy, magic, cabalism, and related fields.

English authors were generously represented and shared honors with learned doctors and divines living on the Continent. Most of the more impressive tomes were published at Frankfort, Germany, although other printing places were indicated on the title pages. The engravings which illustrate the various texts obviously belonged to one school or group of artists. As the designs frequently are without adequate description, we may conclude that the designers had a skill and insight of their own and did not depend for inspiration upon the authors whose works they illustrated.

Often the books were published anonymously or were signed only by initials. A goodly number were accredited to authorities who have survived only as names. Some of these names are impressive in the extreme, but evidently are pseudonyms of persons determined to conceal their true identities. During this cycle, numerous volumes appeared credited to scholars long dead. Some of these books have been proved to be ingenious forgeries with no legitimate claim to antiquity; thus *The Cave of Zoroaster* is without any foundation in Persian doctrine. Semiramis, the mythical Queen of Babylon, never wrote the alchemical tract attributed to her, and we may doubt Aristotle's little book of advice to midwives, which gained considerable popularity during the 17th century. Distinguished-sounding names occur, but when we learn that *The Mineral Gluten* was from the pen of the female adept, Dorothea Julianna Wall-

achin, or that Chrisostomi Ferdinandi de Sabor wrote the *Practica Naturae Vera*, we have added little to the sum of human knowledge.

The general policy of confusion and subterfuge and the repeated use of pseudonyms by well-known authors cast suspicion upon many works, and strengthen the belief that a smaller group of writers was involved than is usually supposed. Referring to the general concealment of authorship in England during the time of the Tudors, Edwin Johnson writes: "That period was not only a time of severe repression and harsh government, but also a time when free speech was impossible. Able men could only dissemble and speak in allegory. The Plays of Shakespeare and other writers are, doubtless, a reflection of the period: the names but a disguise—the Play-writers merely the spokesmen of those who would have been sent to the Tower and the Block if they had expressed their opinions openly."\*

A survey of the situation inclines the mind toward the belief that the great philosophical and ethical reformation was engineered by a secret confederation of intellectuals, operating simultaneously and according to a general plan both in England and upon the Continent. We may even suspect that the moving spirit of the entire enterprise resided in England, although a considerable part of the activities previously appeared in France, Germany, and Italy.

In his *Literary Legends*,† John Hutchinson makes a brief survey of the circumstances leading to the so-called "revival of letters," which occurred in the 16th century. He is convinced that a great part of English literature, including Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* and More's *Utopia*, was written considerably later than supposed and the editions

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\*See *The Rise of English Culture* (London, 1904).

†Reprinted from *Baconiana* (April 1913).

back-dated. Hutchinson favors the hypothesis that a large number of books, highly controversial and inciting rebellion against the artificial limitations and restraints imposed upon learning, originated in that "factory of wits" known in London as the Inns of Court. These Inns were the abode of young intellectuals, many with legal training, and most of them strongly opposed to existing political and educational institutions. Rare Ben Johnson described the Inns of Court as the "noblest nurseries of humanity and liberty in the kingdom." It is quite possible that English Humanism found its most vigorous exponents among that new generation of honest and earnest thinkers, with considerable leisure at their disposal and a spirit for almost any kind of adventure.

When we realize that few facilities were available to check the authenticity of literary claims and pretensions, it is evident that the project was not overly hazardous. After all, even at that time, literacy was an exception rather than a rule, and the public mind had slight capacity and less interest in weighty matters.

After more than three hundred years it is still difficult to find an audience for the Shakespearean plays. These immortal productions are too literary to be enjoyed by the majority of modern theater-goers. It is difficult to understand how they could have been produced at all in the shoddy environment of such Elizabethan theaters as the Rose or the Globe. Not one in a hundred of those attending had even heard of Caesar or Cleopatra, nor had they any interest in the delinquencies of the Plantagenets or the misfortunes of Hamlet and Lear. Their concept of comedy was distinctly bawdy, and the sly jests of the great Bard had nothing in common with the prevailing sense of humor. Even the titled and landed gentry, whose patronage per-



mitted the English theater to survive, would have been in a condition of complete mental exhaustion after one soliloquy, if an actor could have been found capable of memorizing the lines. We are forced to conclude that the mighty dramas were intended to be read, not played, and were for the edification of certain persons and not for the amusement of the general public.

If we seek to "marry the lives" of the Elizabethan gentry with their supposed literary productions, we can but wonder how Sir Walter Raleigh, seldom distinguished for the profundity of his thinking, chanced to produce a monumental work like his *History of the World* while languishing in the Tower of London. It is also a little surprising that the surviving Tudors or the incumbent Stuarts enjoyed so keenly a play like *Henry VIII* with its devastating implications. Someday we shall be forced to revise our concept of life and letters in merry England in the good old days.

If, however, we recognize the presence of a deep-laid scheme, nurtured in secret and bequeathed to posterity as a priceless heritage, numerous difficult compounds are immediately dissolved and the basic elements become obvious. The curious emphasis which distinguishes the late 16th and early 17th centuries as a period of incredible intellectual fertility reveals a distinct pattern of human industry. It is not enough that a new star appears in Cassiopeia, rather we must seek a constellation of genius shining in a cultural firmament.

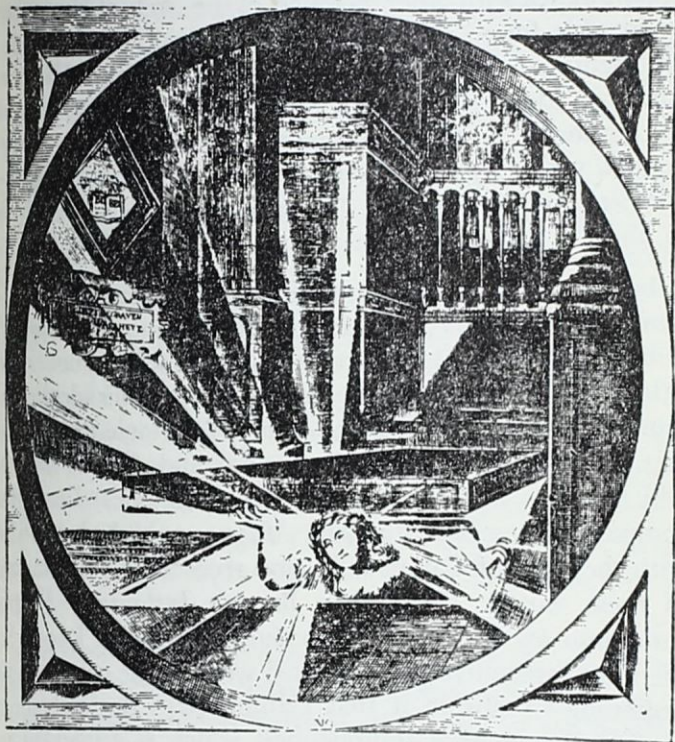
The Inns of Court were the most logical headquarters of this heroic band resolved to bring about the universal reformation of mankind. Oxford and Cambridge were the castles of intellectual feudalism. Here the sons of proud families were polished beyond their capacities. But the Inns of Court nourished a stronger brood. Here younger

sons with little hope of large patrimony or hereditary honors and the sons of less opulent ancestry were preparing themselves to carve destinies by merit and courage. Their positions and estates suited them for rebellion and some bitterness. With less to lose and more to gain by overturning institutions already tottering, these young men had the courage to dream, the fortitude to wait, and the ingenuity to plot their courses with appropriate subtlety.

This intrepid band matured their projects with their lives and, as occasion permitted, attracted younger blood to their cause. Throughout its operations the scheme reveals some of the most basic thinking ever accomplished by the human race. Those of the original group who attained high stations used their new offices to further the central project. Thus came into being an overempire of poets, scholars, philosophers, and mystics. The old order of learning ended, and through them a new concept of the dignity of the human estate was revealed to a long-suffering world. These Humanists were the original Utopians, and although their literary productions appeared under various names in far-flung places and at different times, these apparently unrelated publications were circumscribed by one vast intent, which becomes evident as we examine the separate projects.

The prominent Moravian educator, Comenius (Johann Amos Komensky, 1592-1670), was convinced that public schools should be workshops of humanity, and not torture chambers. He was the moving spirit behind a broad program of Humanistic reform based, at least in part, upon Francis Bacon's *Advancement of Learning*, which appeared first in the English edition of 1605. Comenius must be included among the Utopians, because he was resolved to bring about a reformation of the intellectual habits of mankind. "There can be no doubt," wrote Professor Laurie of

the University of Edinburgh, "that it was chiefly the speculations of Lord Verulam that fired the imagination of Comenius, and led him to conceive hopes of reducing all existing learning to a systematic form, and providing for all the more ambitious youth of Europe, in a great Pan-



—From *The Works of Jacob Cats* (Amsterdam, 1655)

#### THE RESURRECTION OF TRUTH

This rare and little-known engraving shows a radiant figure raising the lid of a tomb. The stone is labeled *Veritas*. The panel on the wall (difficult to read in the reproduction) contains 33 letters including the numbers, and states that truth died in 1626. The number 33 is associated with the degrees of Freemasonry, and is the cipher number of Francis Bacon. The year 1626 is the supposed year of Bacon's death. This emblem relates to the resurrection of the esoteric doctrine from its secret tomb; that is, the Society dedicated to its perpetuation through concealment.



sophic College, opportunities for the universal study of the whole body of science. To this universal and systematized learning he gave the name of Pansophia or Encyclopaedia.\*

A little investigation reveals that Comenius had a personal acquaintance with other members of the circle of Humanists responsible for so many advanced ideas in the various departments of learning. For example, Johann Valentin Andreae, identified with the Rosicrucian reformation and the author of the Utopian romance, *Christianopolis*, corresponded with Comenius, writing him with words of encouragement and saying that "he gladly passed on the torch to him."

In the highly significant year 1623, Tommaso Campanella (1568-1639), the Italian Renaissance philosopher, published his contribution to the Utopian scheme under the title, *Civitas Solis* (*The City of the Sun*). This ideal community, broadly speaking the result of Platonic inspiration, was ruled over by philosopher-priests and, for the time in which it was written, was definitely socialistic. Comenius compared Bacon's *Instauratio Magna*, published in 1620, with the work of Campanella, and recorded his conclusions in these words: "But when Bacon's *Instauratio Magna* came into my hands—a wonderful work, which I consider the most instructive philosophical work of the century now beginning—I saw in it that Campanella's demonstrations are wanting in that thoroughness which is demanded by the truth of things. Yet again I was troubled, because the noble Verulam, while giving the true key of Nature, did not unlock her secrets, but only showed, by a few examples, how they could be unlocked, and left the rest to future observation to be extended through centuries."

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\*See John Amos Comenius, *Bishop of the Moravians* (London, 1881).

On at least one occasion Comenius was the guest of the Invisible College, which had been set up in England to advance the scientific principles of Francis Bacon. He was invited by Parliament, and this august body went so far as to propose that the revenues of Chelsea College be placed at the disposal of Comenius, so that he could advance the great Pansophic scheme and create a Universal College, solely devoted to the dream of Lord Verulam. But England was on the eve of open rebellion, and the government was so involved in the problem of its own survival that the project could not be consummated. Comenius was invited to Sweden, where he was instrumental in reorganizing the schools of the country. He believed in a balanced program for the training of the young, and his curriculum included arts, sciences, practical economics, languages, and handicrafts.

Examples like that of Comenius reveal the bonds of common interest and purpose which existed among the prominent Humanists of the time. Bacon's *New Atlantis* was the natural consummation and integration of several schemes or projects. His College of the Six Days Work is identical in principle with the Pansophic University of Comenius.

Considerably later, William Blake (1757-1827), though disagreeing with the Baconian method, conceived of a Utopia based upon the mystical experience of the forgiveness of sin. Blake was of the opinion that men should not ask God to forgive their imperfections, but should establish a commonwealth in which each man forgave the sins of his fellow men. As long as the entire race shared in an inevitable tendency to fall short of the full practice of virtue, there could be no permanent and benevolent social structure. Not until criticism and condemnation ceased would

humanity accept naturally and honestly the burden of human imperfection. Blake was a Neoplatonist, and both his writings and his art were inspired by the political convictions of Plotinus and the dream of the final establishment of Platonopolis, the philosophers' commonwealth.

The Utopias, therefore, reveal their hidden purpose and the deep-laid plan which projected them into literary form when we accept the existence of a Secret Order of men dedicated to the emancipation of the human mind. From this general premise, therefore, we proceed naturally to a consideration of the machinery of Secret Societies responsible for the benevolent conspiracy which resulted in the emergence of the democratic way of life.

#### *Trajano Boccalini, and other Matters*

Pierre Bayle describes Trajano Boccalini (1556-1613) as "a great wit at the beginning of the 17th century."\* There is little information on Boccalini's personal life. His skill in satire gained for him many friends and numerous enemies. He was forced to leave Rome, his native city, and to take refuge in Venice. Here his eventful career closed, but the details of his decease are somewhat contradictory. According to one account, he was strangled to death in his bed by three hired assassins. Another "informed" source reported that he died of cholic. A third equally reliable historian described his demise as the result of being slugged with sandbags by Spanish bravados in the employ of the Ambassador of Spain. One thing appears to be reasonably certain—he died.

Although the general causes were numerous, the particular cause of Boccalini's untimely end appears to have been a satirical work entitled *De Ragguagli di Parnasso*, a veiled but bitter exposition of the foibles of the time. He

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\*See *A General Dictionary, Historical and Critical* (London, 1735).



trounced his contemporaries so thoroughly that his friends and supporters recommended a change of air, as the atmosphere of Rome was evidently unsalubrious. *De Ragguagli di Parnasso* (*Advertisements from Parnassus*) was published originally in two parts, the *Centuria Prima* in 1612, and the *Centuria Secunda* in 1613. Each part was called a *Century* because it contained one hundred sections or "Advertisements."

The "77th Advertisement" of the *First Century*, entitled "A General Reformation of the World," is usually regarded as the most important part of the entire book. Under the title *Allgemeine und General-Reformation der ganzen weiten Welt*, Boccalini's "77th Advertisement" was published separately in 1614. The first appearance in print of the *Fama* of the Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross forms an appendix or supplement to Boccalini's satirical allegory. F. Leigh Gardner is of the opinion that there is no connection between the manifesto of the Rosicrucians and the "General Reformation." He suggests that they were merely bound together, but his explanation is not satisfactory.

Bayle takes exception to the accusation made against Boccalini that he should be included in the number of writers convicted of plagiarism. "This term seems to me improper," wrote Bayle, "because Boccalini was never charged with stealing the work of another, but with lending his own name to conceal the true Author." If Boccalini allowed other pens to hide their works behind his name, was some other unnamed person the writer of *De Ragguagli di Parnasso*? Bayle said that he had seen a French translation of the *First Century*, printed in Paris in 1615, with the author's name given as Fougasse.

Minshaeus, in 1625, published his *The Guide Into The Tongues*. This book was the popular dictionary of the

period. The fifteen hundred seventy-fifth entry is devoted to the meaning of the word *boca*. The definition includes: "I. *Bocone*, a *Boca*, *i. the mouth*." As Boccalini suggests the diminutive of *Boca*, the name could mean "the little mouth." Is this a mouth that speaks other men's words?

Of course, it may be a coincidence that the first English edition of the *Advertisements from Parnassus* together with the *Politick Touchstone* was translated by the Rt. Hon. Henry, Earl of Monmouth. This edition contains a fine portrait of the Earl, but the motto engraved around the Rt. Hon. Henry has been cut backwards, and can be read only by looking through the paper against the light. Monmouth suggests "my mouth." Evidently milord admired his own likeness above that of Boccalini, for there is not even a vignette of the Italian satirist.

A new English edition of the "Advertisements" was edited in 1704 by N. N. Esquire. This unidentified gentleman took great liberties with the text for reasons not entirely obvious but of the greatest significance. This edition is heightened with a portrait of Boccalini supported by satyrs, but the engraving is so commonplace that it suggests that the artist was unfamiliar with the features of his subject.

N. N. Esquire was particularly original in his treatment of the significant "77th Advertisement." The "General Reformation" is concerned with the court of Apollo on the summit of high Parnassus. Here dwell the wise of all time, and some who are not so wise but owe their fame to the acclaim of others more stupid than themselves. Here also are the literati, the intelligentsia of the world, who have come to lave forever in the pools of Helicon. From these, Apollo selects a committee to devise a plan for the reformation of human society. In the original version, Jacopo Mazzoni da Casena is appointed secretary of this Delphic

board of scholars. N. N. Esquire improves upon his author. He elects a new secretary for Apollo's committee, bestowing the distinction upon Sir Francis Bacon.

At this point we must introduce George Wither (1558-1667), an English poet and satirist of Puritan persuasion. He is remembered especially for his verses in a *Collection of Emblemes* (London, 1635). Many of Wither's writings were published anonymously, including *The Great Assises Holden in Parnassus, by Apollo and his Assessours*. In this work, the god Apollo decrees that certain poets and writers shall be brought to trial for their crimes against truth and literature. The Assessours gather in the Praetorian hall on the "learned hill," i.e., Parnassus. In the cast of characters, Apollo presides over the tribunal, and next to him in authority is Francis Bacon, introduced as "the Lord Verulam, Chancellor of Parnassus."

The references to Apollo, Parnassus, Pegasus, Helicon, and the Muses occur regularly in early works pertaining to the Rosicrucians and Bacon's secret Philosophic Empire. Michael Maier, in the *Themis Aurea*, declared that the Temple of the Rosy Cross was located beside Helicon on double-peaked Parnassus, where Pegasus opened a fountain of perennial water. Johann Valentin Andreae concealed the place of publication of several of his tracts by declaring them to have been issued at Parnassus, Helicon, or Utopia.

In the rare first edition of Bacon's little collection of fables, *The Wisdom of the Ancients* (London, 1619), there are some verses to the author, possibly by Sir Arthur Gorges. In these, Bacon is described as "inventions storehouse; Nymph of Helicon; Deepe Morallist of Time tradition." From these references and cross-references, it will appear that Boccalini's *Advertisements from Parnassus* is not an isolated literary phenomenon. The publication of the "77th



Advertisement" in connection with the *Fama* is not merely a printer's contrivance, and the ultimate appearance of Lord Bacon as the secretary of Apollo's committee is by intent and not by accident.

The frequent references to Apollo may not be so innocent of implication as the superficial reader might imagine. Wither, in *The Great Assises, etc.*, after introducing Apollo as Master of the Praetorian tribunal, writes, "Sage *Verulam* sublim'd for science great, as *Chancellour*, next him had the first seat."

Although it is evident that Lord Bacon was profoundly versed in the secret learning of antiquity, none of his biographers have indicated any *source* from which he could have derived his inspiration. There can be no reasonable doubt that Bacon was an initiate of one or more of the Secret Schools then flourishing in Europe. Indications point in the direction of the Troubadours and the Courts of Love. Bacon composed amorous poems presumably to Margaret of Navarre, and Baconians have made much of his hopeless adoration for this young princess. The unrequited-love theme, of course, is the essential element in the mystical poetry of the Troubadours, where truth was mistress. Through these minstrels, Bacon could have established contact with Neoplatonism and the heresy of Manes.

At the end of the first chapter in the *Sixth Book* of the *Advancement of Learning* (London, 1640), Bacon defines his method as "*traditionem Lampadis, the Delivery of the Lampe, or the Method bequeathed to the sonnes of Sapience.*" Referring to Bacon's note "*Traditio Lampadis, sive Methodus ad Filios,*" Mrs. Henry Pott writes: "The organization or 'method of transmission' which he established was such as to insure that never again, so long as

the world endured, should the lamp of tradition, the light of truth be darkened or extinguished.\*

Bearing the problem of the *Traditio Lampadis*, etc. in mind, we turn to *Alle de Wercken*, by Jacob Cats, published



—From *The Works of Jacob Cats* (Amsterdam, 1655)

#### LAMPADO TRADO

in Amsterdam, 1655. Jacob Cats, lovingly spoken of as "Father Cats," was a Dutch poet and humorist who wrote many emblem books, and was a gentleman farmer. While

\*See Francis Bacon, and his Secret Society.

a young man he visited England and later, in 1627, made another journey there, and was knighted by King Charles I. He lived to a great age. Among Cats' emblems is one, under his attractive title "Lampado trado," reproduced herewith. An ancient man hands the lamp of tradition across an open grave to a young man with an extravagantly large rose on his shoe buckle. Exactly this type of rose shoe buckle appears on the statue of Lord Bacon above his supposed tomb in St. Michael's Church at St. Albans.

Is the old gentleman passing on the lamp intended as a portraiture of the venerable adept who bestowed the "method?" If so, who could he be? Instantly a likeness comes to mind—Dr. John Dee (1527-1608), the sage of Mortlake. Very little is actually known about Dr. Dee except that he was frequently consulted by Queen Elizabeth in matters of state, and was dedicated to research in the esoteric arts, alchemy, magic, and spiritism. He was many years Bacon's senior, but they had several acquaintances in common, including Lord Burleigh.

The adept, Comte de St.-Germain, once admitted that he had assisted Dee in the production of his book, *A True Relation and What Passed Between Dr. John Dee and Some Spirits*. Charlotte Fell Smith says of John Dee, "He was of the new learning, though before Shakespeare and Bacon."\*

At the present writing, I have discovered only one account of the meeting of John Dee and Francis Bacon. In the private diary of Dr. John Dee, published for the Camden Society in 1842, is the following entry under the date, August 8, 1581: "Mr. Bacon and Mr. Phillips of the court cam." This would almost have to be Francis Bacon, who was then about twenty years old. Sir Nicholas Bacon

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\*See *John Dee* (London, 1909).



was dead, and the other contemporary members of the family were not in court. It is also unlikely that Bacon's visit was in any official capacity; he had not yet sufficiently advanced his fortunes. In his little work, *Dr. John Dee: Elizabethan Mystic and Astrologer*, G. M. Hort, after estimating the strength and weakness of Dee's personality, concludes with this significant line, "But he passed on the Torch!"



—From *A True & Faithful Revelation, etc.* (London, 1659)

DR. JOHN DEE  
The sage of Mortlake

That master of cautious utterances, Arthur Edward Waite, describes Dr. Dee as "precisely the kind of person who might have entered or possibly even founded a Secret Society like that of the Rosy Cross. . . . It might seem feasible that he was actually connected with our debated subject during its embryonic period."\* Overwhelmed with his own audacity, Waite then devotes several hundred words

\*See *The Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross*.

to retrenchment, and concludes that there is not the "least indication" that Dee belonged to any Secret Society.

If a man belonged to an esoteric Fraternity, it seems reasonable that he should not leave behind him a signed affidavit nor publish the fact during his lifetime. All that we can hope for is some subtle clue or intimation. At best, evidence must be circumstantial. Mr. Waite wasted his time attempting to prepare a documented chronological account of Rosicrucianism. He arrived nowhere, because he demanded records intentionally hidden and facts purposely concealed.

### *The Utopians*

The intellectuals of the Renaissance period in European history revealed an almost total lack of social consciousness. There was no concept of a growing or unfolding human society. Life for the privileged classes was opportunity without responsibility. The individual lived to advance his own interests or the purposes of his own social level, oblivious of the pressing requirements of the human family as a group.

The medieval thinker contemplated the inevitable changes brought by the passing of time without sensing the presence of any purpose or pattern beneath the surface of shifting circumstances. He knew that he lived in a world different from that of the Greeks or the Romans, but the differences appeared incidental or providential. He never thought in terms of having outgrown old orders or old ways. So many artificial hazards, most of which originated in crystallized mental habits, obscured natural trends that there seemed no reason to assume any personal responsibility for progress. The proper end of life was to cultivate luxury, and

to devise various means of diverting one's attention from the inevitable tragedies which have always burdened existence.

Physical life was without purpose or incentive, and there seemed to be no valid reason to waste much effort or time building a better world for future ages one would not live to see. The Church taught that all human activity was controlled by the divine pleasure. Things happened simply because Deity willed them to happen, and men must endure that which the gods decree. The death rate in the city of Florence was high, a proof that the Eternal Father desired to chastise the Florentines. It never occurred to these good people that their perfectly reasonable habit of throwing all their refuse into the middle of their streets and leaving it there might have anything to do with their vital statistics. Unburdened by any morbid reflections about the relationship between cause and effect, there was slight incentive toward the correction of existing faults, errors, and delinquencies. In fact, it would be sheer audacity to attempt to improve upon conditions which God had decreed as the means of accomplishing his own fearful and wonderful ends.

Man is never so sure of himself as when he huddles with others of his kind, and all are dominated by common convictions. These convictions assume the proportions of universal truths. The era of exploration which followed the voyages of Columbus brought about a rapid change in the popular mind. A spirit of adventure was born, and man began to break through the self-imposed delusion which had limited his perspective for centuries. The Protestant Reformation enlarged the religious horizon, freeing the human intellect to explore the mysteries of the physical world without benefit of clergy. A courage to do and to



dare began to manifest itself in many parts of Europe and in several levels of the social structure.

This drift toward Humanism gained rapidly in momentum, and in three hundred years the vast structure of scholasticism was almost broken down. Man emerged as an active agent in shaping the destiny of his way of life. He began to perceive that he could play an important part in molding his own destiny. He glimpsed an evolving plan, with himself as a determining factor in the rate of his own progress. His convictions were summarized in the proverb: "God helps them who help themselves."

A social conviction is championed first by a few progressive spirits, and prominent among the pioneers of Humanism were the Utopians. Today the early efforts of these social visionaries are regarded as extravagant and fantastic, but in their own times, these men, through their writings, exerted a wide sphere of influence. Most of the Utopias were advanced originally as fictional works, but they were philosophic fiction. Each in some way depicted a new and better concept of life brought about by a conscientious desire to practice the essential precepts of Christian morality and ethics and simple human decency. The Utopian visionaries were really men of vision.

✓ Most of the Utopias were inspired by Plato's Empire of the Philosophic-Elect. This was a commonwealth of the wise which flourished because its citizens conducted themselves in a civilized and enlightened manner. It has been pointed out that Plato was one of the most intellectually mature men of the ancient world. He traveled extensively and enjoyed the intimate association of Socrates, the outstanding socialist of his time. Plato made a thorough study of the political conditions of the Greek States and foreign nations, and had some brief but intensive personal experi-



THE ISLAND OF UTOPIA  
According to the description by Thomas More



ence in government. He recognized the inevitable collapse of corrupt institutions, and advocated the fundamentals of social ethics; namely, individual integrity and collective responsibility. Although Plato's ideal state has never come into actual existence his conception has influenced practically all idealistic and humanistic reforms since his time.\*

The Utopians suffered from the common fault of reformers. They were overoptimistic. They were moved by the conviction that human beings wanted to live well, but were prevented from so doing only by the external pressure of despotism and corruption. It is still a mooted question as to whether a better world will result in better men, or whether better men are necessary to make a better world. Most of the Utopians assumed the former, and they accomplished much even if the end they sought remained elusive.

The Utopias as conceived by their original authors usually existed in remote places, outside the boundaries of the traditional domination of the Church and state. In various ways the heroes of these social romances strayed from the folds of prevailing doctrines into some distant place, where a Philosophic Empire was flourishing under the wise leadership of saintly men administering enlightened laws. The Utopian states were of no great size, but were oases of integrity in deserts of corruption. It was the duty of the hero in each case to investigate the secrets of the success of these various communities and to bring back the record for the edification of his fellow men.

The early Utopias, with the possible exception of Bacon's *New Atlantis*, were dated in an amusing way; that is, they were heavily burdened with the prevailing prejudices of their times. The authors of these works were not really

\*The introductory material by Felix Emil Held in his translation of Andreae's *Christianopolis*.



free souls, according to modern standards, but they were groping toward intellectual honesty. For example, Andreae's *Christianopolis* was stoutly Lutheran, and Campanella's *City of the Sun* was reminiscent of a well-regulated monastery. Both of these Utopias had the virtue of sincerity, although each advanced a cause close to the heart and experience of the author.

The trend in Utopias was distinctly toward the co-operative commonwealth. Men worked together, shared their goods in common, and practiced equality. Even this could be carried to an extreme, and we can but wonder what frustration inspired the idea that common ownership could be extended to include wives. If a trifle orthodox in some respects, and a little heterodox in others, most of the emphases were essentially sound. Education was stressed at a time when it was generally neglected, and all children were instructed in religion, morality, ethics, and social consciousness, as well as in the trades, crafts, arts, and sciences.

Each family was self-supporting. Work was honorable, and the drone was an outcast. Living was simple and orderly. Cleanliness and sanitation were stressed, and each citizen was responsible for his share in the common security. Disputes were settled by arbitration. War was rejected as a means of attaining justice, and the military, if it existed as a class, was entirely defensive. Scholarship and piety were greatly admired. Medicine was socialized. The citizen, by fulfilling his part in the community life, was entitled to all the advantages which the community could offer.

Such regimentation scarcely would satisfy the modern individualist. Life in most of the Utopias would be secure, virtuous, orderly, and devastatingly dull. In this way the fictions bore witness to the temperaments of their writers.

These men were mostly pious characters, aware of a pressing need, but not by nature especially liberal themselves. At best, their liberality was relative, but in their own times they were regarded undoubtedly as radical innovationists.

It was not until after the cycle of the first great Utopias was complete that the next group of socialized fiction made its appearance. The second cycle, extending through the 18th century, included psychological factors well worth noting. The Humanists, having freed themselves from the despotism of the schoolmen and the clerics, found the older Utopias unsatisfactory as concepts of solutions. Freedom was the new keynote, and there seemed little advantage to be gained by freeing oneself from the malevolent despotism of European civilization only to fall into the benevolent despotism of a Utopia, in which every virtue was regimented, and every action controlled by some kind of inflexible social conviction. The intellectual did not want to exchange one old world for another; he wanted to build a new world nearer to his heart's desire. Individualism was becoming a force to reckon with. Each man should be king of all he surveyed. Everyone should have his own Utopia, fitted to his own requirements. He desired not a finished product with which to conform, but rather the raw material which he could fashion according to his own notions.

The place of the Utopias in the adept tradition is our primary concern. There can be no doubt that the writers of these works were influenced, at least indirectly, by the great philosophical institutions of antiquity. Probably Sir Thomas More (1478-1535) is the most difficult to explain and understand of these social idealists. He was not a man given especially to humanitarian impulses. He succeeded Cardinal Wolsey as Lord Chancellor of England. Though

just in his office, he was relentless in his persecution of heretics. He gained the bitter resentment of Henry VIII for refusing to attend the coronation of Anne Boleyn. He was committed to the tower because he refused to take the oath of supremacy. He was executed the following year, and his head exhibited publicly on London Bridge.



PORTRAIT OF THOMAS MORE

Wood engraving, after Holbein

Various explanations have been advanced to explain the motives which led to the writing of his *Utopia*. One group holds the work to be a satire, and another regards the production as inspired by an earnest desire to correct prevailing delinquencies. It is generally agreed that the book stems directly from the Platonic concept of social order. It is possible that the *Utopia* of More was the product of the Secret Societies, which were busily at work under the surface of European politics. If so, the entire subject invites a deeper and more thorough consideration.



There can be no doubt that Andreae's *Christianopolis* was a definite product of the Esoteric Schools, with which the author's name has been associated for more than three hundred years. The same remarks apply to Bacon's *New Atlantis*. At the same time the more obvious factors should not be ignored.

The discovery of America and the highly colored reports of the Spanish and Portuguese navigators changed the whole complexion of European thinking, inspiring intellectuals to a variety of conjectures about the cultural achievements of strange and distant peoples. There were many vestiges of an advanced civilization on the Western Hemisphere. Imagination enlarged the reports that drifted back with the returning adventurers. It seemed highly probable that in isolated areas, far distant from Europe, communities could exist practicing utopian policies, and living under enlightened, even inspired, systems of government, society, and education. The Empires of the Aztecs and Mayas may have exercised a considerable influence upon the receptive minds of progressive thinkers in England and on the Continent of Europe.

### *The New Atlantis*

The most scientific and philosophic of the Utopias is the *New Atlantis, A Work Unfinished*, by Francis Bacon. This fable was published for the first time in 1627 as a kind of appendix to Bacon's *Sylva Sylvarum*. In his preface to the original edition, which did not appear during his lordship's lifetime, William Rawley, Bacon's chaplain, thus describes the purpose of the *New Atlantis*: "This fable my lord devised, to the end that he might exhibit therein a model or description of a college, instituted for the interpreting of nature and the producing of great and marvelous works for the benefit of men."

Rawley also explains that Bacon was diverted from the completion of this fragment by his desire to complete the *Sylva Sylvarum*. As a result the work was never perfected, and, like Plato's earlier account of the Atlantic Empire, it ends abruptly. It is possible that Bacon left other material or at least an outline for the perfection of his fable. In 1660 a book was published in London with the following



FRANCIS BACON, BARON OF VERULAM, VISCOUNT ST. ALBANS

title: *New Atlantis. Begun by the Lord Verulam, Viscount St. Alban's: And Continued by R. H. Esquire*. As Sir Edwin Durning-Lawrence points out, R. H. Esquire, whom no one has succeeded in identifying, describes a number of extraordinary inventions such as submarine boats to blow up ships and harbors, and telegraphy by means of magnetic needles.\*

Several authors have attempted to show that the *New Atlantis* was not merely an ingenious fabrication or inven-

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\*See *Bacon is Shakespeare*.

tion but a description of an existing Secret Society, of which Bacon was the founder or head. These writers have derived considerable comfort from a book named *The Holy Guide*, by John Heydon (London, 1662). Heydon reprinted the *New Atlantis* with certain minor but ingenious changes. He called his revision *A Voyage to the Land of the Rosicrucians*, and inserted references to this Order throughout the original text. Thus Bacon's *Governor of the House of Strangers* became in Heydon's version "a Christian priest of the Order of the Rosy Cross." The always skeptical Arthur Edward Waite devotes some space to an effort to annihilate Heydon's reputation and account, assuming the author of *The Holy Guide* to be a clumsy plagiarist and deceiver.\*

It appears somewhat unreasonable that Heydon could have expected his use of Bacon's fable to pass unnoticed and uncriticized. He must have realized that a Society of scientists and scholars, patterned upon the college of the *New Atlantis*, had been in the process of integration for some years. Perhaps he knew whereof he spoke when he declared that the mysterious city of Damcar, where the illustrious but elusive Father C. R. C. of the Rosicrucian manifestoes was initiated, was located on the eastern side of Bacon's island of the adepts. After all, Bacon describes his college as located "in God's bosom, a land unknown."

Although there has been considerable speculation about the *New Atlantis*, how and why it came to be written, it remained for Miles Poindexter, in his *Peruvian Pharaohs*, to point out a possible source for the basic concept. In the *New Atlantis* the "Governor of the House of Strangers" makes a considerable speech describing the origin of the scientific commonwealth. In this address there are a num-

\*See *The Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross*.



ber of interesting and significant statements. The Governor describes the great Atlantis "that you call America." Later he says: "The said country of Atlantis, as well as that of Peru, then called Coya, as that of Mexico then named Tyrambel, were mighty and proud kingdoms in arms, shipping, and riches: so mighty, as at one time (or at least within the space of ten years) they both made two great expeditions; they of Tyrambel through the Atlantic to the Mediterranean Sea; and they of Coya through the South Sea upon this our island."

According to Poindexter, Coya is Colhua, which was pronounced Coya in Peru. The oldest and highest culture of the Peruvians was that of the Colhuas. "From what source," he asks, "did Bacon learn, as he implies, that the 'Coya' was the oldest and greatest civilization of Peru?—a fact which was unknown to modern science until it was demonstrated by Max Uhle and other archaeologists."

Bacon also mentions that as an emblem of sovereignty the princes of the *New Atlantis* wore in their turbans a golden wheat ear. The headdress of the Incas was turban-like, and in the portrait of the Inca Huascar the scepter of rulership is crowned with a golden ear of wheat.\* It is the opinion of Poindexter, who devoted many years to the study of early American and Polynesian civilizations, that Bacon's scientific college was patterned after schools of learned men flourishing on the Western Hemisphere and the islands of the South Pacific long before the navigations of the Spaniards. In fact, he finds traces of such institutions in many parts of the world. He writes: "That such an institution actually existed among the Aryan ancestors of the Polynesians appears from the traditions preserved among the learned, high-caste Maori, and Polynesian pro-

\*See *Peruvian Pharaohs*.

fessional historians. It is another case where the tradition itself is as important as the fact it relates."

In support of this conclusion he quotes a Maori tradition reported by Eldson Best: "Now a meeting pertaining to the School of learning was held. The place whereat the house was situated was Pu-hi-raki (in Irihia, the traditional cradle-ground of the Maori) and the meeting was held there. . . . The object of this meeting was the ending of the war."\*

A similar tradition is preserved by T. S. Foster and relates to the ancestors of the Rarotongas in the Indus valley. "In Atia [Asia] stood the 'Place of Many Enclosures,' or 'Place of Spirits,'—a great building which rose to the height of seventy-two feet, and was surrounded by a wall of stone. Here the spirits of the ancients after death foregathered with the gods, and chiefs and great priests met to elect kings, and to consult for the governance of men, children, and slaves."†

Learned Societies certainly existed among the Aztecs, Mayas, and Incas. It would seem that in some way Bacon had become aware of these institutions. There is much in his *New Atlantis* reminiscent of the great Amerindian civilizations of Central and South America. It is most intriguing to speculate upon the possibility that Bacon's program for the advancement of the sciences, which led to the establishment of the Royal Society in England, was based upon schools of priestly scholars already flourishing in the Western Hemisphere.

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\*See *Irihia*. Pol. Soc. Jour., 1927, p. 348. The Whare-wananga, "neither more nor less than a College of Learning," S. Percy Smith, *Report Hawaiian Society*, 1910-11, p. 10.

†See *Travels and Settlements of Early Man*, p. 287.

Institutions of initiation similar to those of ancient Greece and Egypt must have existed among the early Americans. For example, the words of the old Cuban councilor on the occasion of his conversation with Christopher Columbus might well have originated in the rites of Eleusis or in the Colleges of the Druids: "I have been advised, most mighty priest, that you have of late with great power subdued many lands and regions heretofore unknown to you, and have brought great fear on all the people and inhabitants thereof, which good fortune you will bear with less insolency if you remember that the souls of men have two journeys after they are departed from this body; the one foul and dark, prepared for such as are injurious and cruel to mankind; the other pleasant and delightful, ordained for those who in their lifetime loved peace and quietness. If, therefore, you acknowledge yourself to be mortal, and consider that every man shall receive just rewards or punishments for such things as he hath done in this life, you will wrongfully hurt no man."\*

Bacon's fable of the *New Atlantis* is a veiled description of the Esoteric Schools which have flourished among all the nations of antiquity as the proper custodians of essential learning. His account suggests the possibility of the re-establishment of the Mysteries no longer hidden, but revealed in all their splendor as the natural and proper universities or colleges for the perfection of mankind. Science is an extension of philosophy, and the scientist must be more than a secretary of nature. He must be also a priest of God; not a man addicted to theology in the ordinary meaning of that word, but an initiate-sage whose wisdom is founded in the apperception of causes. He must know that all physical phenomena are suspended from mysteries in

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\*See *The Aborigines of Porto Rico*, Eth. Ann. 25. Smithsonian Institution.



the Divine Nature. The *New Atlantis* bears the seal of the adept tradition. Some may choose to regard it as fiction, but the thoughtful realize that the preservation of human society and the ultimate perfection of man require the restoration of the College of the Six Days Work.

### *The Royal Society*

An immediate and significant result of Lord Bacon's program for the restoration of learning, as set forth in the *New Atlantis*, was the creation of the Royal Society. It is therefore appropriate at this time to summarize the circumstances that led to the establishment of this learned group. The origin of the Royal Society is obscure, as is nearly everything in which Lord Bacon played a part. Although the year 1660 is usually given as the official date of its foundation, and it was raised to its present status by Charles II in 1662, it is known that the Society was an outgrowth of earlier groups of intellectuals. These met at regular intervals in semisecrecy to exchange opinions and discuss problems of literary and scientific interest.

Most of the important Rosicrucian manifestoes announcing the formation of a Secret Order to reform religion, philosophy, and science were issued between 1614 and 1617. In 1616-17 the historian and poet, Edmund Bolton, was able to interest James I in the forming of a Society for the advancement of learning to be called "King James, His Academe, or College of Honour." The organization was to consist of three classes of members, and the symbol of the Society was to be a green ribbon with the letters J. R. F. C. (Jacobus Rex, Fundator Collegii) beneath the imperial crown. The members were to love, honor, and serve one another according to the spirit of St. John.

The death of King James in 1625 and the political agitations which followed resulted in the disappearance of

this philosophical Society, but we have no proof that it actually ceased to function. The idea was publicly revived in the 11th year of the reign of Charles I, who granted license under the privy seal to found an academy or college called Minerva's Museum. The special purpose of this institution was to instruct young noblemen in the liberal arts and sciences.

The French Academy was founded, according to report, in 1629 by a group of nine men of letters who met weekly. At the suggestion of Richelieu, but much against their own desire and pleasure, these scholars incorporated on March 13, 1634. About the same time an academy called *Die Fruchtbringends Gesellschaft* (The Fruitful Society) was established at Weimar. It is interesting to note that learned groups appeared in most of the countries in Europe in the period between 1616 and 1640.

Robert Boyle, chemist and natural philosopher (1627-1691), was schooled at Eton where Sir Henry Wotton, one of the original Baconian circle, was Provost. Boyle traveled in Europe, and settled in Oxford, in 1654, where he met Sir Christopher Wren. He corresponded with Sir Isaac Newton, John Evelyn, Henry Oldenburg, and Samuel Hartlib. This Hartlib, incidentally, was devoted to the Utopian ideas of Johann Valentin Andreae and Johann Amos Comenius, a disciple of Andreae. Comenius was brought to England in 1641-42 to map out the details for a Society of scholarship.

Sometime before 1646, Boyle attended the meeting of a group which called itself the Invisible College. In a letter to Mr. Marcombs dated October 22, 1646 (sixteen years before the incorporation of the Royal Society), Boyle refers to a secret assemblage of scholars by saying that its members "will make you extremely welcome to our Invisible



College." In a letter to Mr. Francis Tallents written in the same year, Boyle writes: "The best on't is, that the cornerstones of the Invisible (or, as they termed themselves, the philosophical college) do now and then honor me with their company." This quotation seems to refute the opinion held by some that Boyle was the founder of the Invisible College.

According to Charles Richard Weld: "In May 1647 Boyle again alludes to the Invisible College in a letter to Hartlib, which leaves little doubt that he meant by this title that assembly of learned and high-minded men who sought, by a diligent examination of natural science which was then called the *New Philosophy*, an alleviation from the harrowing scenes incidental to the Civil War."\*

There is no doubt that Francis Bacon supplied the incentive which led to the springing up of a network of Societies on the European Continent which were in communication with each other and which practiced a pattern of interlocking memberships. To the members of these various groups can be traced a number of the most important philosophical, scientific, and political writings of their time. To use Bacon's own words: "I rang the bell that drew the wits together." This complex of intellectual groups scattered about Europe and, appearing to focus in the Invisible College in England, seems to meet the requirements of the College of the Holy Spirit described in the manifestoes of the Rosicrucians.

The Invisible College in its turn emerged to public admiration as Gresham College until 1660, when it became the Academy. The English poet, Abraham Cowley (1618-1667), was a moving spirit in this transition period which ended in the founding of the Royal Society. He took a

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\*See *History of the Royal Society* (London, 1848).



lively interest in scientific research, and published in 1661 a pamphlet, *The Adventure of Experimental Philosophy*. At the suggestion of John Evelyn, the distinguished diarist who was also interested in the Royal Society, Cowley wrote



—From *The History of the Royal Society of London*, by Thomas Sprat (Lon., 1667)

#### THE ARMS OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY

an ode dedicated to this group, and this poem was probably his last work. Cowley was buried in Westminster Abbey, which indicates the degree of admiration in which he was held.

Cowley's friend, Thomas Sprat, one of the founders of the Royal Society in its final form and afterwards Bishop of Rochester, wrote *The History of the Royal Society* which was first published in 1667. He prefaces his history with Cowley's *Ode to the Royal Society*. There are several references to Bacon in this poem. To quote three lines:

Bacon at last, a mighty Man, arose,  
Whom a wise King and Nature chose  
Lord Chancellor of both their laws. . . .

In the text of his book, Sprat implies by a curious negative statement that the Royal Society was the fulfillment of Bacon's dream: "Even my Lord Bacon, with all his authority in the state, could never raise any College of Salamon, but in a romance." The entire outline given by Sprat shows clearly that it was the purpose of the Society to bring this romantic conception of learning into a physical reality. Needless to say, the rules of thinking advocated by the Royal Society were entirely Baconian.

The temper of the undertaking and its roots in the philosophical Mysteries of antiquity can be implied from the writings of Sprat, who was the first historian of the Society. "It is not to be questioned," he observes, "but the Egyptians delivered the rites of their religion to strangers [Grecians], with as much solemnity at least, as they did the Mysteries of their hieroglyphicks or philosophy. — Now then, let Pythagoras, Plato, and Aristotle, and the rest of their wise men, be our examples, and we are safe."

Another curious link in the chain of circumstances which binds the Royal Society to the esoteric tradition is suggested by Hugh B. C. Pollard: "We find in association with it [the Royal Society] not only Boyle, but Sir Christopher Wren, Sir Robert Moray, Elias Ashmole, and Locke. These are not only the most important names in the early Royal Society, but also in English Freemasonry. Sir Robert Moray, who was the driving force behind the Royal Society, had entered the Rosicrucian Fraternity in 1641, and was also the driving force in Speculative Freemasonry. Prior to this period we have no satisfactory trace of any Masonic organization other than purely operative or guild concerns.

There is no trace of any person of quality in association with these minor guild Mysteries, yet between 1630 and 1660 we find people of social eminence—and it was a day when social-caste rules were binding—enrolled in Masonic organizations.

“The balance of evidence suggests that there is a very strong connection between the early history of the colleges which eventually became the Royal Society and the early history of English Freemasonry. The Bacon tradition had been handed down in full and successfully in so far as the exoteric or scientific side of his concept was concerned, but the inner secrets of his philosophy—the esoteric teaching of Rosicrucianism—this had not been transmitted. The scaffolding of symbolism remained, bits and pieces of the tenets, ideas, suggestions—but not the all-essential clues. The secrets had been lost.”\*

Symbols now definitely associated with Freemasonry appear on the title pages of the acknowledged writings of Andreae, Bacon, Fludd, and others belonging to this circle of “unknown philosophers.” These emblems include the compass and square, the plumb line, the two columns, the blazing triangle, and the All-Seeing Eye. Thirty-three gentlemen met together in the closing years of the 16th century for the purpose of restoring the glory of the guilds. They adapted the traditions of the Dionysian Artificers of Greece and the Collegia of Rome to their own peculiar purposes; namely, the rebuilding of Solomon’s Temple as the Salamon’s House of Bacon’s *New Atlantis* or the College of the Six Days Work. This was before the publication of Bacon’s philosophical fable, but the scheme had been perfected approximately thirty-three years prior to the printing of the *New Atlantis*. All this was part of a well-laid plan

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\*See *Discovery, A Monthly Popular Journal of Knowledge*, Vol. 7 (May 1926).



to restore the Mystery institutions of antiquity as a means for the accomplishment of the universal reformation of human society.

### *The Pansophic College*

Comenius is known to have exercised a considerable force upon Masonic and other Secret Societies operating in Europe in the early years of the 17th century. He became a chaplain of the Bohemian Brothers, and, like most religious liberals, suffered considerable persecution. Exiled from Austria with other non-Catholics, he traveled extensively and resided four years in Hungary and Transylvania by invitation of Prince Ragozcy. It is said that when James Anderson compiled his celebrated work, *The Constitutions of the Freemasons*, in 1723, he incorporated many of the elements of educational reform outlined by Comenius.

We must pause for a moment, therefore, and consider the Pansophic system of education, at which Comenius worked so diligently between 1630 and 1637. During these years, he was integrating a program or method of universal education based upon the Baconian concept of learning. Comenius sent a long letter to Hartlib in England outlining his project. Hartlib, already referred to in connection with the Royal Society, was so impressed that he published the epistle without permission in 1637. Later in his *Collected Works*, Comenius called this letter *Prodromus Pansophiae*.

The *Prodromus* presents a sketch of the Pansophic University, which combines the function of a college and a temple. The plan is Utopian in the education field. Christian Pansophy, which is idealistic encyclopedism, is divided into seven parts. The first part explains the need and

possibility of such a college-temple, and sets forth its structure and dimensions. The second part reveals "the inner apparatus of wisdom," and the fundamental principles and axioms by which man may attain to the knowledge of all things knowable. The third part examines all visible Nature toward the discovery of secret causes. The fourth part explores the human personality and its reasoning powers. The fifth part treats of man's spiritual nature and his restoration in Christ. The sixth part is the true and, to the world, unknown theology, which leads all men to God. The seventh part sets forth the means by which this true and eternal wisdom can be disseminated throughout the world.

Comenius was convinced that previous systems of education, both religious and secular, had failed because they led to competitive specialization. The lawyer was ignorant of philosophy; the physician was without spiritual insight, and the physicist knew nothing of metaphysics. Through Pansophy the human being was to be led gently and wisely through the knowledge of *things* to the love and service of God, the source of all things. The Baconian foundation of this scheme is obvious, and the fact that the outline was published at Oxford prior to the founding of the Royal Society may have influenced the form and constitution of this learned body.

Although the use of the word *pansophy* to designate an organization or college of universal science is generally supposed to have originated with Comenius, the term actually links this great educator directly with the Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross. Comenius was twenty-six years old when an obscure writer, who signed himself Theophilus Schweighardt Constantiens, published a curious little work entitled *Speculum Sophicum Rhodo-Stauroticum*. The title page

states that the book is an "extensive explanation of the *Collegium* [society, brotherhood or universal building] and of the rules of the specially enlightened Brotherhood of the Rosicrucians." The author, who describes himself "by the grace of God and Nature unchangeable forever," concludes his preface with the words: "From our centralleamic Museum I wrote this on March 1, 1617." The title page is dated 1618, and no place of publication is given.

Frater Theophilus, after rambling about in a maze of pious phrases, finally gives the following description of the *Collegium* of the "through God, high-enlightened Brotherhood of Rosencreutz." Much can be read between the lines of his curious wording.

"It is a building, a great building, without doors or windows; a princely, yes, imperial palace, to be seen from everywhere and still hidden from the eyes of men. It is adorned with all kinds of divine and natural riches, and a satisfactory examination in its theory and practice is allowed to everyone without extra remuneration or expense. But this privilege is practiced by but few, since the building seems to be badly constructed, poor, old, and well-known to the mind of the news-hungry and stupid people. Of itself, it is, however, so rich, so artistically and marvelously constructed that there is no art, science, riches, gold, precious stones, money, possessions, honor, authority and knowledge in the whole world which cannot be found in this most blessed palace in the highest degree.

"It is, however, thus fortified by God and Nature and protected from the violence of imprudent people that though all battering-rams, cannons, and petards, and more such newly invented war instruments would be turned against it with the greatest possible force, still all human effort and labor would be in vain and for nought. This



now is the *Collegium ad S. S.* of the Brotherhood of Rosencreutz. This is the royal, yes, more than imperial palace, whereof the brothers speak so kindly in their history (*Fama*); wherein are hidden the gorgeously precious treasures and riches; in this book they are clearly enough indicated."

While all this description is interesting and certainly refers to the concept of a universal college-temple, the point of greatest interest lies further on in the tract. On page fifteen of the *Speculum*, the reticent Theophilus remarks: "I have advanced so far in my Pansophistic studies [*Pansophicus studiis*] that I would not therefor exchange all the great riches and treasures of this world."

Later, on the same page, our author has a subheading which reads: "Here begins the happy Pansophia of the Rosicrucians, founded by God the Almighty from the eternity of the world on and graciously reserved for the sons of this blessed century." The *Speculum* ends with three engraved plates, the first of which is called the "Tree of Pansophia." The figure is reproduced later in the collection of Rosicrucian diagrams, published under the title *Geheime Figuren der Rosencreutzer* (Altona, 1785-1788).

The *Speculum* also contains the only known representation of the *Collegium Fraternitatus*. The Temple of the Rosy Cross is depicted on wheels, suspended from heaven by a cord, and surrounded with emblems relating to the foundation of the Society. Thus we have a direct reference to a Pansophic College published nineteen years prior to the outline for such an institution with the same name prepared by Comenius. All things considered, we are entitled to suspect that more than a happy accident is involved. The college-temple projected by Comenius, Bacon's College of the Six Days Work, the Rosicrucian workshop, and the

Invisible College mentioned by Boyle, in which Hartlib was a moving spirit, are remarkably reminiscent of each other. It is most unlikely that they could have represented independent enterprises, the more so when we consider the overlapping of prominent memberships.



TITLE PAGE OF SPECULUM SOPHICVM RHODO-STRAUROTICVM



The title page of the *Speculum*, reproduced herewith, presents many curious emblems relating to the correction of the educational deficiency emphasized by Comenius. Two female figures—one labeled Physiologia, and the other Theologia—immediately attract the attention. They personify science and religion. The figure of science carries the emblems of religion: the flaming and winged heart, the rose of divine love, and the palm of martyrdom. The figure of religion has a heart suspended from its neck, but it carries the compass and a rule inscribed "Nature and Art." Here, then, is a synthesis of learning, with science supporting religion, and religion supporting science. The entire engraving represents the concept or method by which the universal reformation of human society is to be accomplished. Beneath the panel containing the title is one of the oldest of the Rosicrucian seals, a cross within a wreath ornamented with four roses.

### *The Robinsonaden*

A type of literature called the Robinsonaden made its appearance in the early years of the 18th century. The first concrete example of this literary trend was Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*. Other outstanding works of this class include *Histoires des Sevarambles* of Vairasse, *Die Insel Felsenburg*, and the *Life of Joris Pines*. As a result of shipwreck, one or more persons are cast upon an uninhabited island. The gradual improvement of themselves and adjustment to a new and solitary environment are the outstanding features of these Utopias.

✓ The internal pressure toward individuality, which was building up in the human subconscious, was introduced for public consideration by such works as *Robinson Crusoe*. Although generally attributed to Daniel Defoe, there are



some reasonable doubts about the true authorship. Certain material originated in the adventures of Alexander Selkirk, who had given his diary and related papers to Defoe. Beneath the factual incidents, however, is a powerful psychological summary of the human being confronted with the problem of organizing himself and creating a way of life on a remote island in the midst of a vast sea. Crusoe is impelled to go forth adventuring to escape from the pressure of old traditions. In his quest for fame and fortune, he finds himself alone, an experience common to all original thinkers. First, he longs for the companionship of others, but finally resigns himself to the sober task of putting his own little island in order and seeking contentment and security within himself.

The philosophic implications of the story of Robinson Crusoe are enormous, but receive scanty considerations from the average reader. The hero is modern man attacking the problems of physical existence on a little island, which represents the planet earth itself. Here, isolated in the sea of space, the castaway must build everything that he needs, and protect himself from all natural hazards by his own skill and patience. Discouraged of receiving outside assistance, that is of being rescued by the facilities of conventional society, he must face all responsibilities alone, accomplishing for himself all that is necessary for the survival of himself.

✓ The success of the book *Robinson Crusoe* was immediate, and it ran through four editions in four months. This could mean only that the popular mind was drifting on the tide of social pressures toward the concept of self-reliance. Man was no longer satisfied to be the victim of his world and its dominant trends. He sensed the possibility of attaining victory over circumstances by the integration of his own

personality. In substance, he was heading toward rugged individualism. At the same time most were aware of the magnitude of the undertaking which intrigued their minds. They had to build a new world, opposed at every step by vested authority. Only those who could find some internal strength could hope to survive the pressure imposed by environment.

After *Robinson Crusoe* had received wide approval as a book of the new age by those who could read between the lines, several other works appeared attacking the basic problem from different viewpoints. These together constitute what is called the Robinsonaden Cycle.

All the Utopias are efforts toward the crystallization of the concept of the Philosophic Empire. The wise man's city, ruled over by the Philosopher-King, is the heroic estate of man himself. Here, between heaven and earth, the human being must create his proper and natural abode. The physical world is insufficient to meet the requirements of unfolding consciousness, and the spiritual spheres are too distant and exalted to be acceptable to the average mortal. Instinctively man aspires to create a middle ground free from excess and extreme wherein to fashion his perfect way of life.

All the islands of the Robinsonaden are havens for those who have drifted long and hopelessly in the sea of despair. Islands are the peaks of submerged mountains, and they represent in the romantic fables spheres of spiritual security. In each case salvation is an escape to a higher level of consciousness. The principal difference between the 17th-century Utopias and the 18th-century Robinsonaden lies in the condition of the land where the castaway finds refuge.

In the older cycle, the adventurer discovers a well-

organized society which excites his respect and even veneration. The philosopher's city already exists somewhere as a model state. This harps back to Plato's doctrine of archetypes or patterns. But the later cycle is Aristotelian; the island is uninhabited, an earthly paradise which the deceptions of men have not corrupted. Here the survivor must create his own Utopia, and unfold his own convictions.

The drift toward materialism or naturalism as a psychological force becomes apparent. The human mind, struggling to escape from the pressure of traditionalism, rejected the past *in toto*, the good with the bad. There was no plan of life until man made his own. It was necessary to emphasize this point, for it was the key to the emergence of the dominant conviction of the modern human being. The idealist was not a prodigal son returning repentantly to his father's house, but a disillusioned wanderer resolved to find some quiet spot and build a house of his own.

The 18th-century Ulysses had most of the adventures of the ancient Greek hero, but he lacked the motivation upon which Homer's *Odyssey* was built; that is, the long journey back to the far-distant native land. The 18th-century intellectual was spiritually homeless. He had no desire to return to that which he had left behind. It was this rejection of the spiritual homeland with all its implications as the motivation for the journey of life that resulted finally in the modern age of desperate material enterprise.

The Robinsonaden expounds two solutions to the dilemma of the cultural shipwreck. The first, exemplified by *Robinson Crusoe*, meets the emergency by personal adjustment and acceptance. The survivor of the disaster passes through a series of internal decisions, and then settles down with resignation to meet the challenge of survival. In other words, he adapts himself to the circumstance in which he



is placed. It appears impossible for a lone individual to create a new social system for others. In *Die Insel Felsenburg*, circumstances are set up which permit the development of a positive social concept. The survivors take an active and aggressive role. They impose their own patterns upon their environment, and emerge as victors over the challenge of Nature. They demand the natural heritage of their kind, and assert the supremacy of mind over matter.

The most advanced and highly specialized of all the Robinsonaden was *Die Insel Felsenburg*, published by Johann Gottfried Schnabel, in four volumes, between the years 1731 and 1743. Schnabel's book, which originally appeared under the title *Wunderliche Fata Einiger Seefahrer, adsonderlich Alberti Julii, eins gebohrnen Sachsens*, etc., is the story of the wonderful fate of a seafarer who was wrecked on the island of Felsenburg. This work, which is little known to English readers, unfolds the social implications of Humanism with all the ponderous machinery of detail so native to the German mind.

The springboard of *Die Insel Felsenburg* is the familiar story of the shipwreck. The hero, Albertus Julius, seeking a new home to escape the confusion of the Thirty Years War, was cast away on the island of Felsenburg, where he established an ideal state. Whereas most of the other Robinsonaden are rooted in the psychology of the 17th century, *Die Insel Felsenburg* expounds the moving tenets of Jean Jacques Rosseau, including the rebellion against civilization and the dynamic desire to return to a natural way of life.

The shipwreck strands four persons on the island of Felsenburg. These are Albertus Julius, a French aristocrat by the name of Lemelie, and a young married couple, M. van Leuven and Concordia, his wife. In a cave

among the rocks of the island, these four come upon a human skeleton. With it is an autobiography of the unhappy victim of a previous shipwreck. From this writing the four survivors gain a valuable knowledge of living conditions on the island. Of course, the skeleton and the record found with it signify tradition and the experiences of the past upon which the new social order must be built.

So fertile is the land that material necessities present no problems, and, with the exception of the human equation, life unfolds toward a paradisiacal state. Albertus, van Leuven, and Concordia are dominated by the new cultural concept, and are impelled toward a high standard of human dignity and relation. Lemelie, however, who comes from an old noble family, personifies the Renaissance pattern of conduct, and attempts to set himself up as the sole dictator of the island. In the feuding that follows, Lemelie kills van Leuven in an effort to gain Concordia for himself. In order to protect Concordia, Albertus, in turn, slays Lemelie.

The descendants of Albertus and Concordia become the citizens of the little state of Felsenburg. The social development of the group rests solely upon the foundation of behavior, and the members are carried along toward the solution of their problems by this communal consciousness. It has been said that *Die Insel Felsenburg* should be included in the group of so-called anarchistic Utopias. If so, this is a purely cultural anarchy with very few political factors. According to Fritz Bruggemann, cultural Utopias develop at the end of a cultural epic, which has grown old and worn out and, therefore, induces us to look longingly to the future.\*

While intrigue, treason, power, and force used for ego-centric purposes were the keynotes of the Renaissance man,

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\**Utopie und Robinsonade* (Weimar, 1914).

the 18th century developed an entirely new group of social and cultural values which tended to universal brotherhood. This new pattern of human tendencies is the content of Schnabel's Utopian message. Moralities are clarified; marriage is placed on the foundation of love and fidelity, and genuine emotions of piety and brotherly affection distinguish the ideal.

There is a curious spirit of mistrust, however, running through the entire story. This is first personified by Lemelie, and it is later intensified in the attitude of Concordia and Albertus toward the world outside of their island. Their resolution to remain is not based entirely upon the integrity of their own social experiment. They are afraid of the outside world with its intrigue and deceit. In substance, there is a strong factor of escapism. They would never have attempted to escape from their island, or even considered such a move, had it not been that they needed to secure mates for their children.

*Die Insel Felsenburg* should not be regarded merely as a haven for those political refugees of the mind who are seeking to escape the tyranny of corrupt political institutions; rather the emphasis is upon a much higher level. They are searching for a simple, honorable way of life, where they can live according to virtue, peace, and harmony. Their particular adversary is the immorality of masses and privileged classes. The search is for an idealization of personal relationships.

Early editions of *Die Insel Felsenburg* contain a map of the island. From this it is evident that a representation of the human brain is intended. As a compass point should normally be directed to the north, the map must be inverted. When this is done, the internal construction of the brain becomes evident. The Utopian scheme is an escape

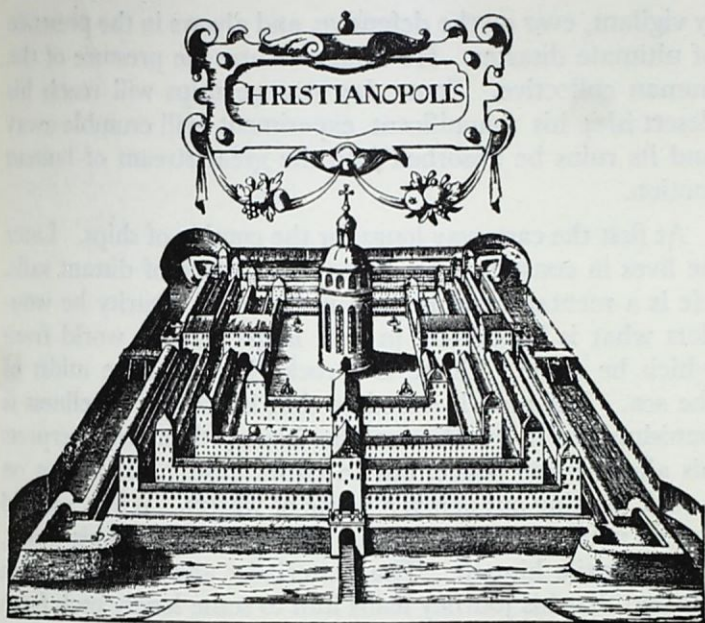


toward an intellectual life, an adventure in a world of mind. The island of Felsenburg exists primarily as an experience of thought, and the brain symbol becomes entirely appropriate to represent the physical empire of the thinker. A comparison of this map with the earlier engraving which occurs in the first editions of More's *Utopia* shows clearly that both islands are cranial in form and are identical in meaning.

The Philosophic Empire of the Platonists and Neoplatonists was an ever-existing state of consciousness to which man must ascend by the circuitous route of self-discipline. The dimensions and proportions of the ideal world were already established, and must be accepted or rejected, never modified or changed. The journey to the Utopia was inward toward the self, and the end to be attained was an experience of conscious identification with the universal plan.

We can compare Andreae's ground plan of the fabulous city of Christianopolis with a Tibetan Buddhist symbolic painting of the Western Paradise of Amitabha. Immediately it becomes evident that the "city four-square" described in the vision of St. John, the mountain Meru, the home of the gods in Brahmanic theology, the heavenly city of Asgard, where the Nordic All-father held court, and the mystic shrine of the Knights of the Holy Grail at Mont Salvat are all one and the same. The Blessed Isles of the West, the Gobina (the sacred island in the sand ocean of Shamo), the lost islands of the Atlantides—each represents overstates to which the human being must attain by the ritualistic journey and shipwreck.

Such a mystical conception, however, was contrary to every instinct of 18th-century Humanists. Without the spiritual anchorage of ancient concepts, they became wan-



—From the *Reipublicae Christianopolitanae Descriptio* (Strasbourg, 1619)  
 AN IDEAL REPRESENTATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF CHRISTIANOPOLIS

derers in an intellectual world, recognizing no source of salvation except the passing security that they could build with their own energy and ingenuity. Having no realization of an interior life to be attained by mystical apprehensive faculties, they directed their mental energies toward the creation of a heavenly state in the physical world.

Man, unconscious of the universal edict which demands self-mastery, settled down to the intensely modern program of making himself ruler over his physical environment. But there is a minor chord of pathos in all the Robinsonaden. The human being cannot become the supreme autocrat over time, place, and condition. All that he builds is swept away by the currents of universal time. He must be eternal-

ly vigilant, ever on the defensive, and always in the presence of ultimate disaster. He cannot escape the pressure of the human collective. Some day strange ships will reach his desert isle; his magnificent experiment will crumble away and its ruins be absorbed into the great stream of human motion.

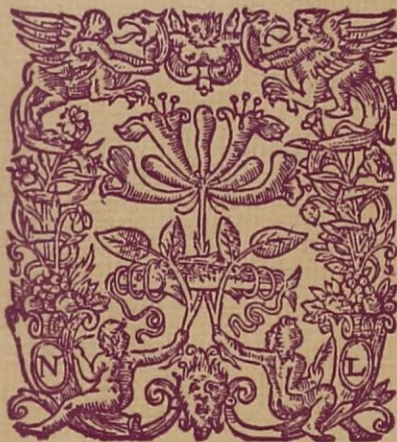
At first the castaway longs for the coming of ships. Later he lives in constant fear of the appearance of distant sails. He is a mental creature, and in his small security he wonders what is happening in that larger outside world from which he came. There is a rocky island in the midst of the sea. If a man is exiled to that island, his loneliness is punishment; if he chooses the island, then he interprets his aloneness as peace, but in either case, he is a man on a rock, looking out across a waste of waters. When a world fears a man, it may exile him. When a man fears his world, he may exile himself. The materialist always discovers in the end that his journey leads him to some lonely rock from which he must look out toward space and the stars. It is only the truly wise man whose adventure of living brings him back at last to that far country which is his real home.



# The Adepts

In The Western Esoteric Tradition

By **MANLY PALMER HALL**



**Part Four**

**Masonic Orders of Fraternity**

MASONIC ORDERS OF FRATERNITY

# THE ADEPTS

In the Western Esoteric Tradition

By MANLY PALMER HALL

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MASONIC ORDERS OF FRATERNITY

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By MANLY PALMER HALL

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This work is a section of a comprehensive survey of the adept tradition, which will be complete in fifteen parts. It is issued in the present form because of the unprecedented rise in the cost of book-production. Only in this way can the material be made available to students at a reasonable price.

# MASONIC ORDERS OF FRATERNITY

## FOREWORD

The direct descent of the essential program of the Esoteric Schools was entrusted to groups already well-conditioned for the work. The guilds, trade unions, and similar protective and benevolent Societies had been internally strengthened by the introduction of a new learning. The advancement of the plan required the enlargement of the boundaries of the philosophic overstate. A World Fraternity was needed, sustained by a deep and broad program of education according to the "method." Such a Fraternity could not immediately include all men, but it could unite the activities of certain kinds of men, regardless of their racial or religious beliefs or the nations in which they dwelt. These were the men of "towardness," those sons of tomorrow, whose symbol was a blazing sun rising over the mountains of the east.

While it is difficult to trace the elements of a pattern never intended to be obvious, the broad shape of the design is dimly apparent. The Invisible Empire, integrated and ensouled by Bacon and his so-called literary group, was the archetype of those democratic Societies which directly and indirectly precipitated the era of revolution. Thus, the way was cleared for the first great experiments in practical self-government. Much more was required than a statement of human rights. It was necessary to prepare the individual to administer such rights. There can be no enduring freedom for those who cannot protect liberty with intelligence. It is not enough that a man have rights; the man himself must be right.

It was inevitable that the Orders of Fraternity should sponsor world education. The human mind must be enriched in essential knowledge and be freed from the burdens of ignorance, superstition, and fear. The program included a systematic expansion of existing institutions and the enlargement of their spheres of influence.

Slowly, the Orders of Universal Reformation faded from public attention, and in their places appeared the Orders of World Brotherhood. Everything possible was done to prevent the transitions from being obvious. Even history was falsified to make certain sequences of activity unrecognizable. The shift of emphasis never gave the impression of abruptness, and the motion appeared as a dawning of social consciousness. The most obvious clues to the secret activity have been the prevailing silence about the origin and the impossibility of filling the lacunae in the records of 17th- and 18th-century fraternal Orders.

It is usual to consider fraternal Orders as merely Societies of good fellowship, but *fraternity* actually implies much more. The brotherhood of man must become a social reality before the New Atlantis can exist as an ideal commonwealth in this world. Without fraternity, all the larger benevolences of mankind come to nothing. There can be no enduring security, no lasting peace, no practical co-operation between the classes of society or the sovereign States of the political sphere without the conviction that all men share a common heritage of opportunity and responsibility. The "method" must first give birth through time to an ideological empire without physical boundaries, composed of citizens of a certain quality, a common vision, and a mutual purpose.

The Orders of Fraternity were attached by slender and almost invisible threads to the parent project. Like earlier



Schools of the Mysteries, these Fraternities were not in themselves actual embodiments of the esoteric associations, but rather instruments to advance certain objectives of the divine plan, especially the accomplishment by man of such self-improvement as was immediately necessary. In spite of every adversity and impediment, the advance of the human estate was inevitable. It was, indeed, the way of heaven unfolding in the sphere of human society through the machinery of the Mysteries and their adepts.

The era of exploration revealed a vast continent in the Western Hemisphere suitable for colonization and ideal for the political experiment of democracy. By circumstances which appear more than fortuitous, Lord Bacon was a member of the Virginia Company, which included several illustrious names associated with the Baconian literary group. His lordship was also an organizing spirit in the whole English colonization scheme. It is evident from his writings that he regarded America as an ideal location for his Philosophic Commonwealth. That he proceeded to advance his program by practical means is evident from reports available to any interested historian.

During the formative period of Colonial growth, numerous Baconian landmarks were set up as monuments to the enterprise. Even through the Revolutionary period, American patriots worked hand in hand with members of English and European Secret Societies. It may require an extensive research to reveal the details of the well-laid plan, but the general workings of the design are reasonably obvious. Bacon carefully prepared a model for those who succeeded him, bestowing upon them not only a legacy of learning, but also a code of orderly procedure.

From the *New Atlantis*, it can be inferred that the Royal Society was only a microcosm or miniature of the temple

of world science through experience. Knowledge, organized by vision and perfected by skill, was to be the enduring foundation of a free State. For the first time in history, progress was to be ensouled by purpose, and mankind was to be equipped with the instruments necessary to perfect an enduring State that should not crumble from lack of vision or means.

In the present section of this outline of the adept tradition is set forth the culmination of the European phase. The Masonic Orders of Fraternity acted as media for the dissemination of the high doctrines of liberty, equality, and fraternity. They supported, with their private means and their moral strength, those patriots fighting for liberty in Colonial America. Some, like Junius, concealed their identities and have never been positively identified. Others, like Lafayette and Kosciusko, committed their names and reputations to the cause without reservations. Now that the practical advantages of secrecy have ceased, it is proper that the citizens of the United States of America and the British Commonwealth of Nations should realize, at least, the broad outline of the plan underlying the significant political and social changes which dominated the life of the 18th century.

This is a fitting place to acknowledge with gratitude the co-operation of the Scottish Rite Bodies of San Francisco. They graciously made available their excellent research library, and several works quoted in this section are in their collection.

Manly Palmer Hall.

Los Angeles, California; April 1950.

# THE ADEPTS

## MASONIC ORDERS OF FRATERNITY

### *Masonic Foundations*

Masonic historians have traced the origins of their Order with proper patience and diligence, if not with complete success. The disagreements of learned authorities over the descent of the operative and speculative traditions of the Craft need not be examined here. Societies of skilled artisans, addicted to those arts and sciences concerned with architecture and ornamentation, certainly have flourished from the beginning of historical time. Possibly such associations originated in the ancient practice of perpetuating the secrets of a profession or trade within families.

According to 18th-century Masonic tradition, Rome gathered the most eminent professors and practitioners of the arts and sciences ". . . until they advanced to their *Zenith* of Glory, under AUGUSTUS CAESAR, (in whose Reign was born *God's* MESSIAH, the great Architect of the Church) who having laid the World quiet, by proclaiming universal Peace, highly encourag'd those dexterous Artists that had been bred in the *Roman* Liberty, and their learned Scholars and Pupils; but particularly the great VITRUVIUS, the Father of all true Architects to this Day.



"Therefore it is rationally believ'd, that the glorious AUGUSTUS became the *Grand-Master* of the Lodge at Rome, having, besides his patronizing *Vitruvius*, much promoted the Welfare of the *Fellow-Craftsmen*, as appears by the many magnificent Buildings of his Reign, etc."\*

After the collapse of the Roman College of Architects, the splendid tradition of the builders passed to the keeping of the great Order of Comacine Masters, which flourished during the reigns of Constantine and Theodosius. The *Magistri Comacini* was composed of members of the Roman collegia, who, escaping from the barbarians when they overran the Empire, established themselves on the fortified island of Comacini, in Lake Como. Here they preserved the secret traditions of architecture and the machinery of the Roman guilds. They were responsible for the development of early Lombard and Romanesque styles of ornamentation. The Comacines were divided into Masters and disciples, and were ruled by a Grand Master. Their meeting places were called *Logia*. They wore white aprons and gloves, and had signs, tokens, passwords, and other means of identification.

The Four Crowned Martyrs were the patron saints of the Comacine builders. These martyrs were members of the College of Architects, in Rome, during the reign of Diocletian. They had been converted to Christianity, and steadfastly refused to fashion a statue of Aesculapius. These Masters and one apprentice were tortured to death by order of the emperor. The Four Crowned Martyrs, carrying builders' instruments, were pictured or referred to in many early religious and Masonic writings, including the *Regius MS.* The Quatuor Coronati Lodge, London, the most distinguished Masonic research group, was named in honor of these martyrs.

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\*See *The Constitutions of the Freemasons, etc.*, by James Anderson (London, 1723).

The Comacine Masters supplied the important link between the pagan artificers and the Christian cathedral builders. While it is difficult to prove the historical descent of an initiate Order of adept-architects, Heckethorn summarizes the situation with reasonable accuracy: In antiquity there were corporations of architects and engineers, who undertook the building of temples and stadia; the 'Dionysiaks' in Greece, the 'Collegium Muriorum' in Rome were such. They were the prototypes of the associations of masons, builders, carpenters, who in the Middle Ages flourished chiefly in Germany and England. These, sometimes numbering six to eight hundred members, made contracts with monks, chapters, and other ecclesiastical authorities for the erection of cathedrals or churches. Eventually they made themselves independent of the Church, and in the thirteenth century they formed an extensive building association, originating at Cologne, and having lodges, as they called the directing members, at Strasbourg, Vienna, Cologne, and Zürich. There were other lodges, but these were the most important. They called themselves Free masons, and had ceremonies of initiation. Toward the end of the sixteenth century non-operative masons were admitted into the fraternity, who were called 'accepted' Masons; they included men distinguished for learning or high position. Thus the work in the lodges became more symbolical than operative."\*

Assemblies of men specially skilled in architecture descended from antiquity and flourished in both Europe and Asia. These guilds of artisans were called upon whenever it was resolved to build new cities, to erect monumental structures, or to restore or enlarge shrines, temples, and palaces. Originally, these artisans migrated in groups of various numbers, according to the requirements of the

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\*See *Secret Societies of All Ages*.

occasion. They gathered wherever an elaborate architectural project was in process, and moved on to new locales when the work was finished. According to Huges, Archbishop of Rouen, numerous companies of such masons, under the leadership of a chief whom they called a prince, were traveling about Normandy restoring churches in the year 1145. He also mentioned that these artificers held an important guild union at Chartes, which was a splendid affair.

It was considered indelicate to inquire into the secrets of these associations of builders. Apparently they combined religious and philosophical speculations with the more prosaic rules of construction. The normal boundaries of prevailing racial and religious prejudices were relaxed in favor of these skilled bands of craftsmen, who were permitted to live according to their natural instincts and preferences while laboring in various districts and countries. Great edifices, such as the cathedral churches, often required centuries to complete. Thus several generations of artisans were employed on a single project, and the camps or towns which they established contiguous to their work became comparatively permanent communities. Like the gypsies, these bands of wandering craftsmen never mingled with other people.

If some feudal lord wished to enlarge his castle or build a church, his desires were circulated quietly but thoroughly by the Troubadours or other wandering entertainers. Shortly, a body of Freemasons assembled near the prospective site. These men immediately placed themselves under the rule of a Master elected from among their number, and he, in turn, nominated one man out of every ten as a warden. First, they erected temporary huts for their own use, and then a central Lodge for their meetings. Sometimes they stipulated that the townsfolk should provide tiles to roof



this Lodge, also white aprons of a peculiar kind of leather and gloves to protect their hands from lime and stone. The craftsmen assembled in their Lodge at the beginning of each day's work, and, if they required rough labor from the vicinity, they did not admit these workmen to the principal assembly.\*

The members of these associations of builders were governed by their own duly elected chiefs. Frequently they gave no allegiance to the temporal power which paid their wages. The workmen brought with them not only their families and worldly goods, but also their cultural institutions. These remained comparatively uninfluenced by outside pressures, for not infrequently the workmen did not even speak the dialect of the area in which they labored. The chiefs, or Lodge Masters, contracted to perform and complete the program of work, and often certain skilled men among them also designed the building or corrected and revised plans submitted to them by the ecclesiastical or civil authorities.

Thus it came about that the early Church employed pagan artisans or those of doubtful orthodoxy when some elaborate structure was required. So great was the power of these builders' associations and so urgently was their skill required that it was deemed advisable to ignore religious nonconformity. Probably, the issue was never raised, at least publicly, as the artificers assumed an outward appearance of conformity and declined to disclose any of their secret beliefs or convictions. These Fraternities of craftsmen were privately addicted to the doctrines of Gnosticism, Neoplatonism, and Manichaeism. Later, they were influenced by the Lollards and the much-persecuted Templars. But, like the Troubadours, they had learned discretion in the school of sad experience.

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\*See *Freemasonry and the Ancient Gods*, by J. S. M. Ward (London, 1921).

Men can learn by observation, and early monks with natural aptitudes were able, by degrees, to absorb the essential principles of the science of architecture. At first, these clerics only attempted structures of minor importance, but as their skill increased they fraternized with the older associations and, having given evidence of merit and proficiency, in some instances were actually initiated. This new Order of monastic artisans imbibed some of the old philosophy along with the more practical aspects of the Craft, and became perpetuators of the old learning in its twofold descent as theory and practice.

In Saxon and Norman England, a number of early priests have been identified as architects and masons. These Christian builders perpetuated the apprenticeship system of the ancient Orders as the most practical means of preserving the high standards of the building arts. It is difficult at this late time to differentiate between such Christian and non-Christian guilds of masons, and it is doubtful if much would be accomplished by reopening the issue. Names change, but the principles continue without noticeable alteration.

Traces of Secret Societies can be discovered among the ruins of aboriginal cultures, and such groups still flourish among primitive peoples. Numerous authors have attempted to show that these cults used symbols and rituals similar to those found in Freemasonry. The writings of Augustus LePlongeon, especially his *Sacred Mysteries Among the Mayas and Quiches*, and the researches of James Churchward, as set forth in *Signs and Symbols of Primordial Man*, are examples of this approach. While such parallels undoubtedly exist and may be regarded as interesting; they have only an indirect bearing upon the modern Fraternity.

It is a moot question as to how much of the esoteric tradition was preserved among the guilds of operative

masons through that long, dark period from the collapse of the pagan Mysteries to the appearance of philosophic Masonry in Europe in the early 17th century. In fact, it has not been possible to prove to the complete satisfaction of skeptics that any body of abstract or esoteric lore was directly transmitted from the early collegia to the modern Fraternity. There must be more than shows on the surface, but unless the Masonic historian is aware of the essential substance of the adept tradition, he will find the facts extremely elusive. The deficiencies of history have resulted in the popular belief that Freemasonry is a modern Society, tied to antiquity only by the fortuitous adoption of certain ancient signs and symbols.

Working guilds, such as the cathedral builders, took a lively interest in religious, political, and social issues outside the strict limits of their crafts. The artificers had enjoyed extraordinary privileges of self-government for more than twenty centuries. Within their own groups, they had developed a merit system of mutual co-operation and protection in sharp contrast with the corruptions everywhere obvious in the conduct of civil affairs. They had attained to a practical democracy for themselves, while Europe was still in bondage to economic and political feudalism. There can be no doubt that the guilds cherished the spirit of real democracy and became proficient in the operations of what is now called the merit system, long before it was generally recognized as a possible political pattern.

Joseph Fort Newton held that Freemasonry did not evolve from guild masonry. He writes: "Free-masons existed in large numbers long before any city guild of Masons was formed, and even after the Guilds became powerful the two were entirely distinct."<sup>\*</sup> This author believed that the guilds were Fraternities by voluntary com-

<sup>\*</sup>See *The Builders* (Cedar Rapids, 1916, and other dates).



pact, characterized by the common banquet and the common purse. He acknowledged, however, that they also had a religious and sometimes a secret ceremonial to knit more firmly the bonds of fidelity. According to him, the Freemasons were a superior group that occasionally hired rough masons from the guilds as hewers of wood and carriers of water. This attitude assumes that the guilds were little more than trade or labor unions—benevolent and protective associations.

This may have been true after the guilds were settled in the community life of Europe and England, and the stolid burghers met in the guildhalls to regulate their respective trades. By that time, most of the esoteric lore survived only as a vague symbolism, but the guilds, as respectable trade associations, were the terminal forms of ancient and honorable institutions of initiates.

The English Miracle Plays were mentioned by Dugdale in his *History of Warwickshire*, published in 1656. Such details as he was able to secure were given to him by aged persons who still remembered the plays which they had seen in their younger years. The importance of the pageants given on Corpus Christi Day may be inferred from the quality of the audience. Richard III attended in 1483, and Henry VII and his queen in 1492. Apparently, the pageants were no longer presented in the time of Dugdale.

The Miracle Plays, sometimes presented by the Grey Friars and sometimes by the local guilds, originated in the rituals of the Greek Mysteries. These were revived in Rome, and Christian stories were later substituted for the myths of the pagan gods. Such theatrical performances were morality dramas rather than historical accounts, and supplied a pattern for the ritualistic presentations now associated with the initiation rites of Secret Societies.

Concerning these religious plays presented in England at any early date, Thomas Sharp writes: "Besides the Mysteries exhibited by the monks of Chester and Coventry, there were in both cities certain sacred histories regularly performed by, and at the expense of, the members of the trade-guilds established in them; each society generally



—From *Old England* (London, 1854)

THE PERFORMANCE OF A DRAMATIC MYSTERY  
AT COVENTRY

retaining to itself a particular portion of Scripture for the subject of the annual drama, to the support of which all the brethren duly paid. Thus, at Chester, the Tanners represented *The Fall of Lucifer*, the Drapers *The Creation*, the Dyers *The Deluge*, etc., and at Coventry the Shearmen played *The Nativity*, and the Cappers *The Resurrection*

and *Descent into Hell*.”\* It seems possible that rituals later associated with the degrees of Freemasonry may have been suggested by these guild dramas. If so, the building of Solomon’s Temple would have been a most appropriate theme for the companies of stonemasons.

Even after the guilds had been integrated into the social structure of early modern Europe, they still practiced a code of ethics in advance of their time. In a limited way, but with a considerable sphere of quiet influence, these Societies, unions, and crafts sponsored progress and liberal enterprise. Protective associations were also formed to maintain fair standards of merchandising and to protect their members and the members of affiliate organizations from unfair business practices. While this side of the subject has been emphasized, the pattern of internal government which became a model for a larger social experiment in the political sphere should not be overlooked.

At least some guild masons were aware that their ancient brethren practiced their crafts as forms of religious worship. The ethical symbolism of modern Freemasonry which interprets the processes of architecture as representing the upbuilding of human character was shared by the medieval artificers. In an anonymous work, titled *The Echo of the Divinely Illuminated Fraternity of the R. C.*, published in 1615, appears the statement that “Christ established a new College of Magic among his disciples, and the Greater Mysteries were revealed to St. John and St. Paul.” Dr. Robert Fludd mentioned that the Rosicrucians were wise men who, like architects, erected their House of Wisdom. The Talmud states that “wise-men are called builders because they are always engaged in the upbuilding of the world.” The members of the Essene sect among the Jews

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\*See *Dissertation on the Pageants, or Dramatic Mysteries, anciently performed at Coventry by the Trading Companies of that City* (Coventry, 1825).



were called Bonaim, or builders, because it was their duty to edify or perfect the spiritual temple in the body of man.

It cannot be assumed that the building associations were entirely unaware of their religious, ethical, and moral obligations. While the secrets of the esoteric tradition may have been in the keeping of an overgroup, the guild craftsmen certainly represented the material aspect of a spiritual conviction. John Yarker, who held important Masonic offices and received many high honors from the Craft, crams much useful information into a sentence of heroic proportions: "We cannot doubt . . . that the Epoptae, or higher Initiates, of the first ages of Christianity, transmitted their Mystical Rites; these were taken up and carried forward by Monks, Dervishes, Manichees, Catharoi, Templars, Albigenis, Ghibellines, Friends of God, Militia of the Cross, Rosicrucians, and sects too numerous to mention; and that such secret Schools were in existence long prior to the Reformation in the church, as witness the labours of such men as Fiscini, Pico de Mirandolo, Reuchlin, Erasmus, Agrippa, Rudolphus Agricola, and many more, and that educated Free Masons, in their Masters' Fraternities and Fellowcraft Lodges, were more or less conversant with Pythagoreanism, Platonism, Cabalism, Rosicrucianism, and that these Societies interested themselves in Germany and elsewhere in the spread of the doctrine of the Culdees, of Wycliffe, Huss, Luther, and other Reformers, and the Secret Society established by Cornelius Agrippa in London, in 1510, may have been of this nature."\*

Most of the organized craftsmen of the Middle Ages were nominal Christians, in many respects outstanding for their personal piety and devotion. They differed principally in

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\*See *The Arcane Schools* (Belfast, 1909).

the degree and quality of their interpretations of the Christian dispensation. In a day of almost continuous strife and conspiracy, they dwelt together in co-operation and amity. These associations had discovered a working formula for the practice of liberty, equality, and charity. The guilds continued as important forces in character building until machine production terminated the apprenticeship system.

These conscientious and dedicated craftsmen devised and practiced an ethical code which became a design, or trestle board, for the Accepted Masons who followed them. In philosophic Masonry, Master Builders, inspired by the symbols of fraternity, resolved to perfect the Everlasting House of human brotherhood. The true spirit of modern Masonry arose when these guild artisans first recognized the possibility of applying the rules of the architectural unions and other trade guilds to society in general. For this reason no exact dating is possible; rather there was a gradual emergence of a sincere conviction into the light of a larger sphere of usefulness.

The Protestant Reformation contributed a great deal to the growth of the democratic ideals, and received, in its turn, comfort and security from at least the spirit of the guilds. Yarker suggests that Secret Schools, broadly Gnostic in their convictions, must have permeated the whole of Europe and entered into the guild life of the traders and artisans; otherwise it is impossible to account for the spontaneous support given to the Reformation.

"It is supposed," writes Yarker, "that Luther himself was a Guild member and he actually uses Guild terms in 1527, when he says that he is 'already passed-Master in clock-making.' It is stated that about 15 days after the holocaust which he had the temerity to make of the Pope's Bull, he was waited upon by a member of some Guild holding a meeting at Wittemberg, and induced to go to an Assembly

at the Guild Hall, where after Reception 'by ancient ceremonies,' he received a medal bearing Mystic characters, and was then placed under the protection of the brotherhood. It is quite certain that Secret Societies of Mystics, united by ceremonies with signs, then existed; and it may be that the Reformers strengthened themselves by such Societies, intended for mutual protection, and the Charter of Cologne, 1535, if genuine, may represent such Assemblies."\*

After the Reformation, Europe passed through a critical transition period. Traditional authority was seriously undermined, and the masses were divided in their allegiances between fear of the old and hope for the new. The partnership between the Church and State, having lost much of its prestige, was unable to dominate, much less destroy, the new convictions everywhere revealing themselves. The Protestant denominations shared many of the concepts which had been fostered by the guilds, so these two groups drifted into closer sympathy, causing a demarkation between the forces of reaction and innovation in the spheres of both religious and social convictions.

This summary of an elaborate and extensive process is sufficient to introduce the rise of philosophic or speculative Masonry as distinguished from the operative guilds. Historians assume the shift of foundations to have occurred about the year 1600, although it required some time to clarify and integrate the new concepts. The dawn of the 17th century, a time so burdened with great and significant motions, was the birthtime of Accepted Masonry. The burden of progress was shifted from the physical to the ethical level, and the builders of temples became the builders of man's democratic destiny.

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\*Derived from *National Freem.*, (Washington, 1863); *Row's Masonic Biographies* (1868); and *Canadian Craftsman* (1893).



*Elias Ashmole, Esq.*

Unlike most students of abstruse subjects, Elias Ashmole (1617-1692) was a man of methodical mind, and kept a detailed diary of the events of his life. He tells us, for example, that he was born on the 23rd of May, according to his good mother, at three o'clock in the morning. Mr. William Lilly, the leading astrologer of the day, later rectified the nativity of his friend Ashmole and decided that the exact time, due to the discrepancy between local clocks, was three hours twenty-five minutes and nine seconds A. M. Such niceties of accuracy indicate the thoroughness of Ashmole's mind.

The outstanding English antiquarian of his generation, Ashmole was the son of a saddler. To sketch his career: He became solicitor; was appointed commissioner of excise; and was commissioned captain of horse. His interest in astrology was aroused by Sir George Wharton and William Lilly. He was a high favorite in the court of Charles II; was made Windsor herald, commissioner, comptroller, and accountant-general of excise, commissioner for Surinam, and comptroller of the White Office. He was nominated for the office of Garter king-of-arms, which he declined in favor of Sir William Dugdale, whose daughter Ashmole married after the death of his second wife. In 1677, he presented to the University of Oxford the Ashmolean Museum, the first public collection of curiosities in the kingdom. In 1679, he lost by fire a collection of nine thousand coins, a fine library, and many valuable antiques. In 1682, the University of Oxford having prepared a building for their reception, Ashmole deposited there his principal collection of coins, medals, et cetera, and at his death, further enriched the Museum with a valuable bequest of books and manuscripts.



—Courtesy of the British Museum

ELIAS ASHMOLE, ESQUIRE

From his diary we learn that Ashmole was associated with astrologers, cabalists, Rosicrucian apologists, suspected

members of Francis Bacon's Secret Society, alchemists, early Freemasons, Fellows of the Royal Society, and the groups which led to the founding of that Society. He was the outstanding example of the interlocking and overlapping affiliations of certain 17th-century esotericists. A few extracts will indicate the scope and significance of these acquaintanceships:

- June 16, 1647    Gave thanks to God that his fortunes then permitted him to devote his time and effort to study.
- June 6, 1648    Having studied medical herbs, he "went a simpling" with Dr. Carter.
- Aug. 1, 1649    Attended the astrologers' feast at Painters Hall, where he dined.
- Aug. 31, 1649    The astrologers feasted again.
- Aug. 8, 1650    Another astrologers' feast at 2:00 P.M., at which time he was chosen steward for the following year.
- April 3, 1651    Mr. William Backhouse wished Ashmole to call him father thereafter.
- June 10, 1651    Mr. William Backhouse told Ashmole that he need be his son because he had communicated so many secrets to him.
- Aug. 14, 1651    Astrologers feasted again at same place.
- Sept. 22, 1651    Mr. Vaughan finished the cuts for Ashmole's great alchemical compilation, *Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum*. (Apparently Vaughan was working in the home of Elias in Black-Friars.)
- Oct. 20, 1651    Mr. Lilly gave him several astrological manuscripts.



- March 1, 1652 Began the study of Hebrew with Rabbi Solomon Frank. Next day had a bad headache.
- Jan. 13, 1653 "Father" Backhouse lay sick in Fleet Street; and fearing that he would not recover, communicated to Ashmole as a legacy "in syllables, the true matter of the Philosophers' Stone."
- May 19, 1657 Traveled with Mr. Dugdale.
- Aug. 21, 1660 Presented his three books to the king.
- Jan. 15, 1661 Was admitted as member of the Royal Society at Gresham College.
- May 16, 1661 Was granted arms.
- July 9, 1669 Made doctor of physics at Oxford.
- May 8, 1671 Presented his great book on the Order of the Garter to the king.
- Aug. 20, 1671 He received Dr. Dee's original books and papers.
- July 1, 1674 Received a gold chain and medal from the King of Denmark.

Naturally, Ashmole would not have entrusted too much to a written diary, but the reference to having received "the true matter of the Philosophers' Stone" from "Father" Backhouse indicates that this obscure alchemist had made Ashmole his philosophical heir, which was according to the rules of the alchemistical and Rosicrucian schools. The circumstance seems to have borne fruit, and may explain the authorship of a work which appeared anonymously at the expense and trouble of Ashmole.

About five years after he published the first part of his *Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum*, Ashmole made public

the works of an anonymous adept under the title *The Way to Bliss*. In the preface, the true author is described as an Englishman, one of the "*Anonymi*." The book is the true offspring of its secret author, and reveals itself "sufficiently *legitimate*, though the true *father* thereof be as yet unknown." Apparently, three grains of the Philosophers' Stone were secreted in the original manuscript, sealed between two leaves of the paper. Ashmole claimed to possess a true copy, and implied that an incorrect version was being circulated under the title *The Wise Man's Crown*, or *Rosie-Crucian Physick*.

*The Way to Bliss* is a curious production which exhibits considerable scholarship and acquaintance with obscure authors. An interesting reference to the adepts occurs on page 17: "There is a Nation of *Wise-Men*, dwelling in a Soil as much more blessed [than your] as yours is than theirs: That is, As they bide under ground, and you upon the face thereof, so these Men inhabit the edge & skirt of *Heaven*; they daily See and Work many wondrous things, which you never saw nor made, because you never mounted so high to come among them."\* The anonymous Master then refers to the secrecy and discretion practiced by those who understood the true mystery of the Stone: "First they hide themselves in low and untrodden Places, to the end they might be free from the power of *Princes*, and the Eyes of the wicked *World*: And then they wrote their *Books* with such a wary and well-fenced Style, (I mean, so over-cast with dark and sullen shadows, and sly pretence of *Likes* and *Riddles*, drawn out of the midst of deep Knowledge and Learning) that it is impossible for any but the wise, and well-given, to approach or come near the Matter."

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\*Compare with quotation from John Heydon in Section III of this work, *Orders of Universal Reformation*, page 49.

There have been several references to Ashmole's association with the Society of Astrologers and its festivities. These assemblies have been dismissed by most authorities as conventions of the credulous. There are grounds, however, for suspecting that the astronomers were concerned with more serious business than fan-tailed comets. Christopher Frederick Nicolai\* summarizes the aim and purpose of the Society of Astrologers thus: "Its object was to build the House of Solomon, of the *New Atlantis*, in the literal sense, but the establishment was to remain as secret as the island of Bensalem—that is to say, they were to be engaged in the study of Nature—but the instruction of its principles was to remain in the society in an esoteric form. These philosophers presented their idea in a strictly allegorical method. First, there were the ancient columns of Hermes, by which Iamblichus pretended that he had enlightened all the doubts of Porphyry. You then mounted, by several steps, to a chequered floor, divided into four regions, to denote the four superior sciences; after which came the types of the six days' work, which expressed the object of the society, and which were the same as those found on an engraved stone in my possession."

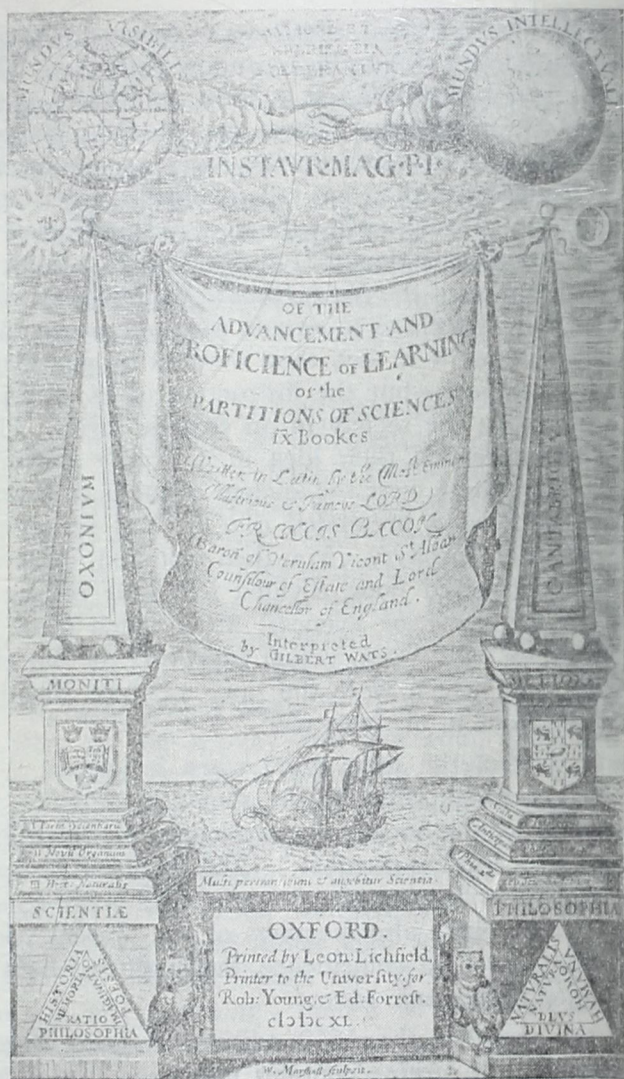
Mackey was of the same mind when he wrote: "But the more immediate effect of the romance of Bacon was the institution of the Society of Astrologers, of which Elias Ashmole was a leading member." This Masonic historian adds that the astrologers met at Masons' Hall because many of the members were also members of the Masons' Company. This may be a coincidence, but it throws light on a dim period of Masonic history.

The title page of the 1640 edition of Lord Bacon's *Advancement of Learning* contains many symbols of Masonic interest. Two pyramidal columns are supported each

\*See *Origin and History of Rosicrucianism and Freemasonry*.



# THE ADEPTS



THE SYMBOLIC TITLE PAGE OF THE FIRST PART OF  
BACON'S *INSTAURATIO MAGNA*

by three globes. At the beholder's left is the column of the sciences, identified with the University of Oxford. Above it is the sun, over which is placed the sphere of the mundane, or visible, world. At the right is the column of philosophy, identified with the University of Cambridge. Above it is the moon, over which is the intellectual, or invisible, world. Both columns are supported by Lord Bacon's books. The intellectual column is shaded, signifying obscure and hidden matters or those beyond the immediate grasp of mankind. The two globes above are united by the clasped hands familiar to all students of Masonic symbols. Between the columns is a curtain bearing the title of the book, with the name and honors of the author. Below, framed by the columns, is Bacon's symbolic ship sailing the great sea of learning. In the *Novum Organum*, the columns again occur, but in this case they are more conservative and resemble closely those which appear in the rituals of the Lodge.

In Ashmole's diary, there are direct references to Freemasonry, including the dates of his own meetings with the brethren:

- Oct. 16, 1646 At four thirty P. M. Ashmole was made a Freemason at Warrington, in Lancashire.
- March 10, 1682 He received a summons to appear at a Lodge to be held the next day at Masons' Hall, in London.
- March 11, 1682 He went about noon, and was admitted to the "Fellowship of Freemasons" by Sir William Wilson, Kt. Five other Brothers were mentioned by name. Ashmole writes: "I was the senior fellow among them (it being 35 years since

I was admitted)." They dined at the Half-Moon-Tavern, in Cheapside, at a noble dinner prepared at the charge of the new-accepted Masons.

Robert Freke Gould quotes the following from a letter written to him by Albert Pike: "I cannot conceive of anything that could have induced Ashmole, Mainwaring, and other men of their class to unite themselves with a lodge of working Masons, except this—that as the Alchemists, Hermeticists, and Rosicrucians had no association of (their) own in England or Scotland, they joined the Masonic lodges in order to meet one another without being suspected; and I am convinced that it was the men who inherited their doctrine who brought their symbols into Masonry, but kept the Hermetic meanings of them to themselves. To these men we owe, I believe, the Master's degree. The substitute word means 'the Creative Energy from the father'—the Demiourgos, and Hiram, I think, was made the hero, because his name resembled Hermes, 'The Master of the Lodge,' the Divine Word (the Egyptian Thoth), the Mercury of the Alchemists."\*

The initiation of Elias Ashmole has long been considered an important Masonic landmark, and he is often referred to as the first gentleman not associated with the building arts to be accepted into the Craft. As he made no mention of the three degrees of the Blue Lodge, it is assumed that they did not exist in his time. Ashmole's huge volume, *Order of the Garter*, proved beyond question his ability as a historian, and it was reported that he contemplated a work of equal proportion on the ancient Society of Freemasons. Unfortunately, the design was never perfected, but he left intimations that a considerable history worth

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\*Sec *Masonic Celebrities: Albert Pike*, by Robert Freke Gould, reprinted from *Arri Quatuor Coronatorum*.



compiling existed. To what degree these records related only to guild masonry is uncertain, but there was a tradition to the effect that from the time of St. Alban (4th century A.D.) charters and other extraordinary marks of royal favor were bestowed upon the builders. Its affairs, however, did not always run smoothly, for in the third year of the reign of King Henry VI (1421-1471), the Society of Masons was abolished by an act of Parliament. Yet, even before this act was repealed, the king and several of his principal courtiers became Fellows of the Order.\* As the king or his nobles were not practicing stonemasons, it is evident that certain persons were "accepted" prior to Ashmole.

The philosopher, John Locke, published in 1753 the copy of an English document believed to have been written by King Henry VI. It refers directly to Masonry, and contains the following curious fragment:

Question: Where did Masonry begin?

Answer: It began with the first men of the East, who existed before the first men of the West, and, going westward, Masonry brought all comforts to the ignorant savages who were not awake to these things.

Ashmole associated with astrologers, alchemists, and Freemasons, and the regard in which he was held is evident from the number of books and pamphlets dedicated to him. In 1650, he published the *Fasciculus Chemicus*, by Dr. Arthur Dee, the son of the learned old John Dee. With this tract was combined a similar one by an unknown author. In the midst of the Masonic muddle of that period, therefore, a group of men, remembered only by the general public as horoscope-mongers and almanac-peddlers, were

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\*This research was contained in a letter written by Dr. Knipe of Christ Church, Oxford, and addressed to the publisher of Ashmole's *Life*. Quoted by Mackey in *An Encyclopaedia of Freemasonry*.

bound together to fulfill, or at least to perpetuate, Bacon's dream of the Philosophic Empire.

There are numerous accounts indicating that astrologers and alchemists developed a sudden and remarkable interest in Freemasonry. The Lodges became so crowded with intellectuals that as early as 1646 there were Masonic meetings in London without even one stonemason being present.



—From *Occulta Philosophia* (Frankfurt, 1613)

#### MATERIA PRIMA

The Hermetic rebus by which is shown the birth of the adept within the philosophic egg.

It has been a mistake to disregard this influx of Rosicrucian apologists and operative Hermetic philosophers. Thomas Norton, who lived during the 15th century, alluded to Freemasons in his *Ordinall of Alchemy*. Robert Fludd used language suggesting his acquaintance with the Craft, and is believed to have formed a Society which was divided into degrees with certain rituals. The Masons' Company of

London kept a copy of the charges presented by Fludd for their consideration. Thomas Vaughan, the alchemist, seems also to have had Masonic affiliations.

The accompanying figure, from *Occulta Philosophia* (edition of 1613), belongs in a series of engravings prepared to illustrate the chemical secrets of Basil Valentine. The symbol is described as representing the *materia prima*, or the first matter of the Stone. The two-headed human figure, bearing the tablet inscribed Rebis (rebus, a kind of pictorial riddle), holds in one hand a compass, and in the other, a square.

General Pike,\* describing this device, writes that the compass "as the symbol of the *Heavens*, represents the spiritual, intellectual, and moral portion of this double nature of Humanity; and the square, as the symbol of the *Earth*, its material, sensual, and baser portion." The arrangement indicates that the compass takes the place of the sun, and the square substitutes for the moon. The union of these two instruments in three positions, in the three degrees of the Blue Lodge, therefore equal or stand for the Hermetic marriage of the sun and moon. The symbols and allegories of the Hermetic Societies contributed to the moral and spiritual enrichment of 17th-century English Freemasonry, and prepared the way for the new Masonry revealed in the following century through the literary activities of Drs. Anderson and Desaguliers.

John Aubrey, antiquary and Fellow of the Royal Society, wrote his memoirs between 1656 and 1691, but they were not published until 1847 under the title, *The Natural History of Wiltshire*. Aubrey alluded to a great convention of Accepted Masons to be held at St. Paul's Church, May 18, 1691, at which time Sir Christopher Wren, the celebrated architect, was to be adopted as a Brother. It is

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\*See *Morals and Dogma*.



probable that Wren was an Accepted Mason in spite of the doubts expressed by the Masonic historian, Robert Freke Gould.

Dr. Richard Rawlinson, in the biographical notes prefixed to his edition of Ashmole's *Antiquities of Berkshire*, borrowed Masonic references from Aubrey's manuscript. Adopted Masons, Accepted Masons, or Freemasons, according to Rawlinson, "... are known to one another all over the World by certain Signals and watch Words known to them alone. They have several Lodges in different Countries for their Reception; and when any of them fall into Decay, the Brotherhood is to relieve him. The manner of their Adoption, or Admission, is very formal and solemn, and with the Administration of an Oath of Secrecy, which has had a better fate than all other Oaths, and has been ever most religiously observed, nor has the World been yet able, by the inadvertancy, surprise, or folly of any of its members, to dive into this Mystery, or make the least discovery."\*

### *The Hiramic Legend*

Solomon's Temple was the outstanding architectural monument described in the Biblical writings, and it also received considerable attention from the Rabbinical commentators and the later cabalists. At a comparatively early date, this structure assumed symbolical significance and was associated with the spiritual, ethical, cultural, and even political institutions which human consciousness was attempting to perfect. Building a better world for the glory of God was a noble purpose, to which end men of good spirit everywhere might dedicate their lives, their honor, and their worldly goods. This was the Everlasting

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\*The quotation concerning Masonry in Aubrey's memoirs was partly derived from the works of Sir William Dugdale (1605-1686).

House, built without the sound of hammer or the voice of workman. The vision and the concept were Dionysiac, but a Christian world, steeped in Biblical tradition, selected a temple from its own sacred writings rather than some sanctuary of pagan Mysteries.

In I. Kings, 7:13, 14, it is said that King Solomon sent and fetched Hiram out of Tyre. This man was a widow's son of the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was of Tyre and a worker in brass. This Hiram was filled with wisdom and understanding and cunning to work all works in brass. And he came to King Solomon and wrought all his works. In II. Chronicles, 2:13, 14, it is Hiram, King of Tyre, who sent a cunning workman, the son of a woman of the daughters of Dan. This Hiram, the builder, was skillful to work in gold and in silver, in brass, in iron, in stone, and in timber; in purple, in blue, in fine linen, and in crimson; also to grave any manner of graving; and to find out every device which shall be put to him.

Tyre was one of the chief seats of the Dionysiac Fraternity of Builders. It is possible that Hiram was a member of this Fraternity, and on his arrival at Jerusalem he instituted similar rules of government among the Jewish workmen about B. C. 1012. He received the title of Principal Conductor of the Works; and if he were not the same as Adoniram, he succeeded him in the office next to the two kings and formed the third person in the Supreme Council of Grand Masters.\*

The Third Degree of Freemasonry seems to have been introduced in the year 1717, although Ragon suggests a date between 1640 and 1660. After 1723, the legend of Hiram, which is an essential part of the ritual of the Third Degree, assumed great Masonic importance. Distinguished scholars of the Craft have indicated by their conflict of

\*See *Royal Masonic Cyclopaedia*, edited by Kenneth R. H. MacKenzie,

opinions that they have not been able to discover the actual origin or substance of this legend. Certainly the slight and insignificant references contained in the Bible do not support the Masonic version of the legend. Although the story of Hiram was accepted as a historical account in the works of both Dr. Anderson (1662-1739) and Dr. Desaguliers (1683-1749), it had received no notice from earlier writers.

Dr. James Anderson was a Presbyterian minister. The date of his initiation into the Masonic Order is unknown, but he revised the Gothic constitutions by order of the Grand Lodge; and his work, titled *The Constitutions of the Freemasons, etc.*, issued in 1723, is a significant landmark. Dr. John Theophilus Desaguliers was a distinguished writer and physicist, and a Fellow of the Royal Society. He was a friend of Sir Isaac Newton, and was initiated into a Lodge which met at the Goose and Grid-iron in St. Paul's churchyard. Through the assistance of Sir Christopher Wren, he was instrumental in the forming of the Grand Lodge in 1717, and had the honor of initiating the Prince of Wales. Dr. Desaguliers devoted most of his life to the advancement of his fellow man, but died in obscurity and extreme poverty, having achieved fame but no substantial material benefits from his industry.

Dr. Anderson's references to Hiram are scarcely sustained by the Scriptures. The good clergyman mentions that splendid time when "... the *Wise King SOLOMON* was GRAND MASTER of the *Lodge at Jerusalem*, and the *learned King HIRAM* was GRAND MASTER of the *Lodge at Tyre*, and the *inspired HIRAM ABIF* [\*] was *Master of Work*, and *Masonry* was under the immediate Care and Direction of Heaven, when the *Noble* and the *Wise* thought it their Honour to be assisting to the ingenious

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\*Abif—Abi, meaning *father* or *magister*; *instructor* in the Mysteries. See Pike's *Sephar H'Debarim*.



*Masters and Craftsmen*, and when the *Temple* of the TRUE GOD became the Wonder of all Travellers, by which, as by the most perfect Pattern, they corrected the *Architecture* of their own Country upon their Return."

The same type of thinking that inspired the 1611 revision of the Holy Bible and Bacon's *New Atlantis*, which was written somewhat earlier but was not published until 1627, focused attention upon the symbolism of the building of the Temple of Solomon and the rebuilding under Herod. Smith, in his *Dictionary of the Bible*, writes: "Perhaps no building of the ancient world . . . has excited so much attention since the time of its destruction, as the Temple of Solomon built in Jerusalem, and its successor as built by Herod. Throughout the Middle Ages it influenced to a considerable degree the forms of Christian churches, and its peculiarities were the watchwords and rallying points of associations of builders."

If we have interpreted him correctly, Joseph Fort Newton regards the Hiram legend as having arisen within Masonry itself, where it was held in strict secrecy long before the critical years of the early 18th century. The time of its emergence has been mistaken for the date of its invention. General Albert Pike, whose Masonic scholarship was prodigious, favored the hypothesis that certain "men of intelligence," especially Drs. Anderson and Desaguliers, were responsible for the creation and introduction of the Third Degree of Masonry, at least in its modern form. Dr. Mackey, another researcher of distinction, considered Desaguliers to be the father of modern speculative Masonry, and several others among the historians of the Craft have insisted that Anderson and Desaguliers manufactured the Degree.\*

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\*For details, consult *The Builders*, by Joseph Fort Newton, and *Ahiman Rezon*, by Dermott.

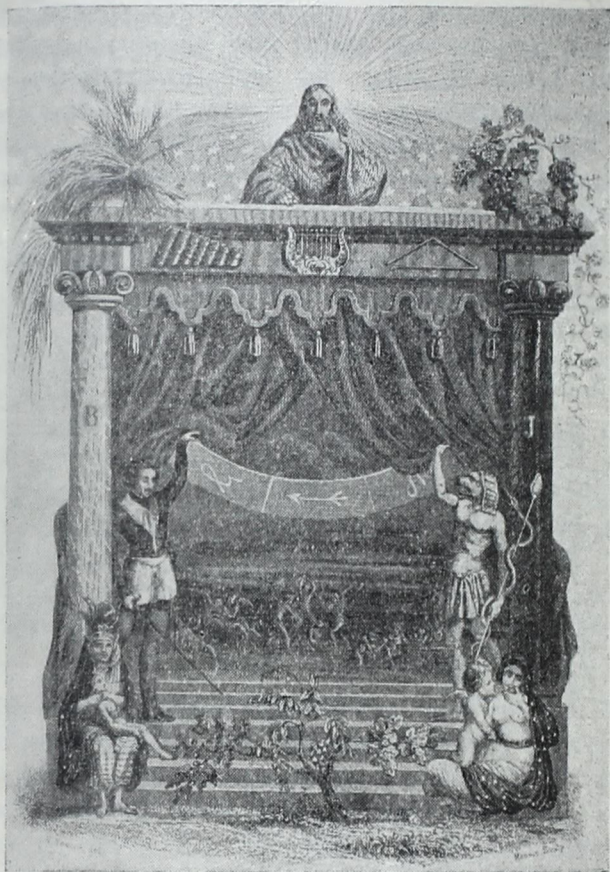
In describing the symbolical Masonry of the early 17th century, Dr. Newton, who professes to be a student of the great mystics, favors mysticism but not mystification. He makes a profoundly significant statement: "Wherefore go elsewhere than to Masonry itself to trace the *pure* stream of Hermetic faith through the ages? Certainly the men of the Grand Lodge were adepts, but they were *Masonic adepts seeking to bring the buried temple of Masonry to light and reveal it in a setting befitting its beauty*, not cultists making use of it to exploit a private scheme of the universe."\*

These men of the Grand Lodge, these "men of intelligence," deserve a more thoughtful investigation than they have received from most Masonic historians. Through Sir Isaac Newton and Sir Christopher Wren, Dr. Desaguliers was associated with a descent of esoteric tradition from Bacon's Secret Society and his phantom College of the Six Days Work, described in the *New Atlantis*. Desaguliers, as a Fellow of the Royal Society, must have been aware of the Society of Unknown Philosophers and other mystical associations of the preceding century. An 18th-century German-Hermetic manuscript, in my collection, declares Freemasonry to be exoteric Rosicrucianism. Those distinguished Protestant clergymen, Drs. Anderson and Desaguliers, and George Payne, the Grand Master, exhibited certain qualities which suggest other affiliations suitable to advance the philosophic side of Freemasonry.

The presumption that Masonry was formed at a late date by Rosicrucian mystics may not be tenable, but the opening years of the 17th century certainly brought with them forces and factors which altered the course of Masonic descent. The initiation of a man like Ashmole, who received the Great Work from a Master of the Hermetic arts, cannot be ignored. Alchemy, an ancient chemical speculation,

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\*See *ibid.*



—From *Histoire Pittoresque De La Franc-Maçonnerie*

#### A DRAMATIC REPRESENTATION OF THE HIRAMIC LEGEND

The central scene revealed by the drawing aside of the curtains is divided into three tableaux. At the beholder's left is Balder, the beautiful, slain by the mistletoe arrow of the blind god Hoth. At the right is shown the conspiracy to seal the body of the martyred god Osiris in a chest of wood, and cast it into the River Nile. The central group represents the death of Hiram Abif at the hands of the three ruffians.



was being transformed from a physical to a philosophical art at approximately the same time that guild masonry was being ensouled by a larger spirit to become a vehicle for the esoteric doctrine. As the pattern unfolds, the presence of invisible but powerful pressures can be sensed, if not fully seen, in the sudden enrichment of the mystical and symbolical side of Freemasonry and in the elaboration and beautification of its rituals.

The Hiramic legend certainly originated in at least a sober reflection upon the sacred dramas of the ancient Mysteries. There are parallels with the Osirian Rites of the later Egyptians, and the treatment of the material suggests the type of interpretation of Egyptian religious institutions current among the advanced European intellectuals of the 17th century. A number of Societies revived rituals and symbols pertaining to the earlier pagan institutions. Much alike in spirit and remarkably similar in form, it is unlikely that these productions were completely independent and spontaneous. It is more reasonable that they emerged from a common source which remained, and continues to remain, concealed.

The effort to show that the Hiramic legend is a veiled exposition of Christian mysticism and morality is not convincing, though it has many devout adherents. The martyrdom of the builder suggests rather what Sir John Frazer calls "the myth of the dying god." Even the elaborate cabalistic legends do not advance the Christian hypothesis. The story of Hiram is a timeless allegory—a key to the Christian mystery rather than the reverse. The roots of so deep a philosophy are not to be found among associations of trades or crafts merely dedicated to mutual comfort and protection. Men will not perpetuate without corruption that which they do not comprehend.

If a higher Order of initiates perpetuated the secrets of the Dionysiacs, it was most fortuitous that these "men of intelligence" should have united their projects with those of workmen's associations just at the time when a Universal Reformation was being agitated by Secret Societies. It seems as though the guilds and trade unions were drawn into the pattern of esoteric descent as peculiarly suitable vehicles to advance the cause of the long-projected Philosophic Empire. It may be found when the rubble has been cleared away that Francis Bacon was the instigator of this significant project, and, after him, those who were party to his program advanced and perfected the work. Several ancient groups were "raised" by his lordship and received from him the Word of Power, "lip to ear."

Unless we are aware of the adept tradition, we are inclined to accept that which is too obvious to be consistent with the dignity of the facts. In Freemasonry, someone rang a bell and brought the wits together, and Bacon acknowledged bell-ringing to be his chosen task. Many streams of useful knowledge flowed along divergent courses throughout the medieval period. The modern world came into existence when these streams were drawn together by "a sufficient reason," thus preparing a new order of essential learning for a new epic in human history.

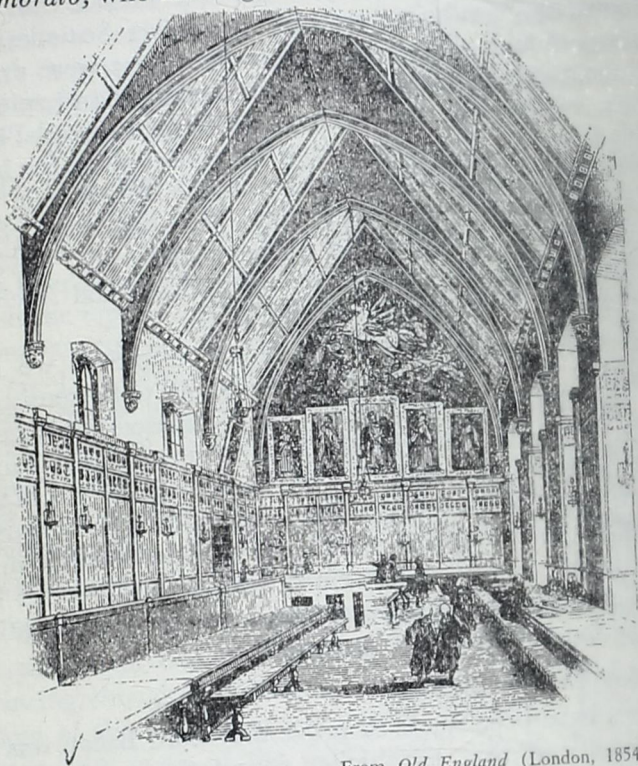
### *St. Alban, the Protomartyr*

Efforts have been made to prove that Lord Bacon was a Freemason and that the higher speculative teachings of the Craft were largely the product of his genius. To date, no historical proof is available, but there is an impressive mass of circumstantial evidence. Alfred Dodd, the distinguished Baconian and Freemason, intimates that Bacon, in his late teens, became a Knight Templar in Ambassador Paulet's suite in France.\*

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\*See *Francis Bacon's Personal Life Story*.

One of the principal symbols of Bacon's secret association of poets was the winged horse, Pegasus. It was the Italian poet, Matteo Maria Boiardo (1434-1494), in his *Orlando Innamorato*, who first regarded Pegasus as the horse of the



—From *Old England* (London, 1854)

#### THE HALL OF THE INNER TEMPLE

The room is dominated by the figure of the winged horse painted on the end wall.

Muses and employed it as a symbol of poetry. Boiardo's poem served as a model for Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* and for the esoteric cycle of Charlemagne and Roland. While living in Gray's Inn, Bacon was a member of the Inner



Temple, which was associated with the site of an ancient mansion of the Knights Templars. The winged horse, Pegasus, was the symbolic device of the Inner Temple, and a huge painting of this mythological creature adorned the wall of the principal room, as shown in the accompanying illustration. The close association of the "horse of high verse" with Bacon's activities and with the ancient Order of the Temple may indicate a trend.

The condition of Freemasonry during the Elizabethan period can be estimated with some accuracy from scattered references. Emmanuel Rebold, in tracing the historical descent of the Order, gives the following entry after the date 1561 A. D.: "Queen Elizabeth, indignant that the Freemasons had not offered the Grand Mastership to her consort during his lifetime, on the 27th of December of this year, ordered the dissolution of the Masonic assembly which on that day commenced its semi-annual meeting, and ordered the execution of her edict to be enforced by a detachment of armed men; but, upon a report having been made to her by the commanding officer of the detachment expressive of the politically harmless character of the assembly, the Queen revoked her order. Subsequently Queen Elizabeth became the protectress of the Freemasons of her kingdom, and confirmed their choice of Thomas Sackville for Grand Master."\*

James VI of Scotland was sympathetic to Masonry and was initiated into a duly appointed Lodge. When he became James I of Great Britain, he encouraged Masonry among the English people, and many persons of high estate joined Lodges as honorary or Accepted Masons. His successor, Charles I, was also an Accepted Mason. Francis Bacon's numerous advancements in honors and estates during the reign of James and the respect in which he was

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\*See *A General History of Freemasonry*.

held by Charles would certainly have made it desirable and advantageous for him to have favored the inclinations of his sovereigns and to have followed their examples. In his writings, Bacon revealed a profound interest in several branches of learning associated with both speculative and operative Masonry, and stated directly that he desired to be considered an architect of arts and sciences.

Masonic scholars have acknowledged that Bacon's *New Atlantis* inspired broad reforms in education, a program symbolized by the perfecting of "King Salomon's House," an allegory very close to the hearts of Masons. His Lordship's inclinations toward secret assembly and the quiet motivation of large projects revealed both his mood and his "method." The occurrence of peculiar emblems, later directly associated with Freemasonry, on the title pages of early editions of the works of Bacon and his associates also suggest some hidden plan or purpose.

We have already mentioned that the numerical equivalent of the letters *b, a, c, o, n* is the Masonically-significant number 33—the degrees of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite. The letters *A. U. M.*, believed to stand for the words *Artifex Universus Mundi* (The Great Architect of the World), by the same numerical cipher also give the sum 33. Thus *A. U. M.* is a cabala for *Bacon*.

Even the Rosicrucian or Tudor rose, one of Bacon's emblems, suggests secrecy and is an appropriate device to conceal the identity of a hidden person or group. The term *sub rosa* (beneath a rose) means *that which is held or performed in confidence*. In the cabale of State, the rose can represent both a secret association and its concealed project.

Bacon's activities have been summarized thus: "But with Elizabeth came the great renaissance of literature, the re-

suscitation of learning by the great Lord Chancellor, Francis of Verulam, learned in the lore of his time, as also with that of antiquity. He is said to have founded a great secret philosophical and literary society, comprising the chief literary men of his day, including Beaumont and Fletcher and Sir Philip Sidney. Isaac Casaubon the classic scholar, Taylor the water poet, Rare Ben Johnson and Shakespeare, and our own Elias Ashmole, made a Mason at Warrington, was also of the number, and here we may perhaps seek, not for the origin but for the renaissance of our rituals and the resuscitation of Masonry. Read Bacon's 'New Atlantis.' Look to the mystic symbolism of the Shakspeare trilogy—'The Tempest,' 'The Midsummer Night's Dream' and 'The Winter's Tale.' ' '\*

Although Masonic records are inadequate for the period of the Commonwealth (1649-1660), and it is generally supposed that the Order was suspended during the civil wars, the period corresponds closely with the activities of that group which appeared immediately after the Restoration as the Royal Society. The Abbe Larudan, in his *Frans Macons Ecrases (Freemasons Crushed)*, attributed the origin of Masonry to the Lord Protector, Oliver Cromwell. According to this highly imaginative abbe, Cromwell proposed in guarded terms to some of his more intimate friends that a new Society should be established to advance the true worship of God and to deliver mankind from oppression and tyranny. Larudan believed that the Order was instituted in 1648, and included among its larger objectives the advancement of Cromwell to a position of supreme power. Others have held that the term "sons of the widow" referred to the Royalists laboring to restore

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\*From comments by Bro. Hugh James upon a paper, *Some Notes on the Legends of Masonry*, by William Harry Ryland, F.S.A., P.A.G.D.C., read before the Quatuor Coronati Lodge, and published in Vol. XVI of its *Transactions*.



the monarchy. The "widow" was Britannia deprived of her king. Facts, however, do not support such hypotheses.

Section III of this series, *Orders of Universal Reformation*, contains an account of the rise of the Royal Society. This outline must now be enlarged, with special emphasis upon the Baconian influence during the transitional period in Freemasonry. In his work, *Sylva, or a Discourse of Forest Trees, etc.* (London, 1664), John Evelyn credits Bacon with the invention of both the new learning to which the Royal Society was dedicated and the formulation of the very design for such a group of learned men.

In a curious work, *Numismata, a Discourse of Medals*, Evelyn included a short digression into physiognomy. He discussed the characteristics of the faces which appeared on certain medallions and commemorative issues of coinage. "In my Lord Chancellor Bacon," he wrote, "a spacious For-head, and piercing Eye, always (as I have been told by one who knew him well) looking upward; as a Soul in sublime Contemplation, and, as the Person, who by standing up against *Dogmatists*, was to emancipate, and set free the long and miserably captivated *Philosophia*, which has ever since made such Conquests in the Territories of Nature."

A few copies of the first edition of Sprat's *The History of the Royal Society of London* included a plate or engraving by Wenceslaus Hollar, from a design by Evelyn. Perhaps it was intended for a large paper edition which did not materialize. The elusive plate, reproduced herewith, depicts three persons closely involved in the formation of the Royal Society. In the center on a pedestal is the bust of King Charles II, the founder and patron of the Society in its surviving form. At the beholder's left is a seated figure of Lord Brouncker, first president of the Royal Society. Opposite him is an unusual representation of



—Courtesy of the San Francisco Public Library

ENGRAVED FRONTISPIECE FROM SPRAT'S  
HISTORY OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY

Lord Bacon carrying in a purse the Great Seal of England. This group is placed upon a checkerboard floor of black-and-white squares, and the background presents an array

of scientific and mathematical instruments indicative of the interests of the Society. The architectural style is in the preference of Christopher Wren.

*Arms & Mottos proposed  
for the Society 1660*

*R SRS. E S SRS*



*Et Angelus Scien-*



*Omnia probare.*



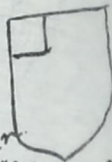
*Quoniam Nescimus.*

*Quis dicere Falsum —  
Audiat — 1. Geor.*

*Verum cognoscere Causas.*



*Ad Majorem Lumen.*



*Nullius in verba.*

*Experiendo:*

*Nullius in verba;*

*†*

*Evelyn.*

—Courtesy of the Library of the Scottish Rite Bodies, San Francisco

# DESIGNS FOR THE ARMORIAL ENSIGNS AND CIPHERS OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY

This sketch is preserved in *Smith's Historical and Literary Curiosities* (London, 1840).

As secretary of the Royal Society and a champion of Bacon's cause, Evelyn went so far as to sketch suitable



heraldic devices to emblazon the purposes of this group. Evelyn developed his sketches according to principles of allegory rather than the rules of heraldry, and his mottoes were intended to convey the aims of the Society—the improvement of science by means of extended communication verified by actual experiment only. Fortunately, the sheet of paper on which he made his first designs, together with several mottoes, has been preserved.

The first emblem is peculiarly Baconian. Within the shield is a ship under full sail—the same vessel which occurs on the title pages of so many of Bacon's books. The motto, "And science shall be advanced," is merely a restatement of Bacon's outline for the advancement and proficience of learning. The second shield is "parted *perfessee* Argent and Sable, issuant from clouds in chief a hand holding a plumb line." The motto is from the Vulgate translation of I. Thessalonians, 5:21: "Prove all things." The third shield is "blazoned Sable, two telescopes extended in saltire, and on a chief Argent the earth and planets." The motto is "How much we know not." The fourth shield bears the sun in its splendor, with the motto, "To the greater light." Besides this is a quotation from the *Georgics* of Virgil: "Who dares accuse the sun of falsehood?" The next shield bears a canton only. The accompanying motto, "On the report of none," was later adopted by the Society. The last shield is charged with a terrestrial globe with a human eye in chief. Above is another motto from Virgil's *Georgics*: "To know the causes of things." To the right is the word *Experiendo* (by experience), with a repetition of the accepted motto and the signature of Evelyn.

King Charles, however, granted the Royal Society a more illustrious armorial bearing\* in the charter of incor-

\*See Section III, *Orders of Universal Reformation*, p. 85, for the arms of the Royal Society.

poration. Evelyn wrote in his diary that on August 20, 1662, "The King gave us the Arms of England to be borne in a canton in our Arms; and sent us a mace of silver-gilt of the same fashion and bigness as those carried before His Maty., to be borne before our President on meeting daies. It was brought by Sir Gilbert Talbot, Master of his Maty' Jewel-house." Later, on the 13th of June 1663, the officers of the Royal Society by common desire caused the royal grant of arms, together with the trick (a sketch thereof), to be entered among the records in the volume of royal concessions in the College of Arms, which was done upon the motion of Elias Ashmole, Esquire, Windsor Herald, and one of the Fellows of the said Society.

Dr. Sprat,\* the first historian of the Society, paid tribute to the genius that inspired the group: ". . . I shall only mention one great Man, who had the true Imagination of the whole Extent of this Enterprize, as it is now set on foot; and that is, the Lord *Bacon*; in whose Books there are every where scattered the best Arguments, that can be produc'd for the Defense of experimental Philosophy, and the best Directions, that are needful to promote it: All which he has already adorn'd with so much Art; that if my Desires could have prevail'd with some excellent Friends of mine, who engag'd me to this Work, there should have been no other Preface to the *History* of the *Royal Society*, but some of his *Writings*."

Alfred Dodd believes that Rosicrucians and Freemasons were the driving forces behind that sequence of groups—the Invisible College, Gresham College, and the Academie—which finally emerged as the Royal Society. "When we consider," he writes, "that the real title of the *New Atlantis* was the *Land of the Rosicrucians*, with its ethical symbolism and its experimental marvels for the uplift of

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\*See *The History of the Royal Society of London*.

humanity by applied science, and that a Masonic authority like James Hughan declared that 'the *New Atlantis* seems to be, and probably is, the KEY to the modern Rituals of Freemasonry' . . . we can begin to see clearly the light shining in the darkness of Francis Bacon's early 'Silent Years.' " \*

When the Viscounty of St. Alban was bestowed upon him, Lord Bacon wrote: "I may now be buried in St. Alban's habit as he lived." The slightest of his lordship's sayings must be carefully weighed, for he seldom spoke except the matter be relevant. It is quite possible that he intended to imply that he was resolved to bury, that is, conceal, some part of his own identity beneath the cloak of an ancient and honored name. It was a curious coincidence (almost too curious) that Bacon became Francis, Viscount St. Albans, and that the early Christian martyr, St. Alban, from whom the Viscounty received its name, was long and intimately connected with the early history of the Masonic Fraternity in England. Representations of the martyrdom of St. Alban were included in emblems known to have originated in the original Baconian group.

The Royal Society was incorporated on St. Andrew's Day so "each fellow wore a St. Andrew's cross of ribbon on the crown of his hat."† In the *Chymische Hochzeit*, Christian Rosencreutz was made to say that when preparing himself for the chemical marriage he bound a blood-red ribbon crossways over his shoulder and stuck four red roses in his hat. The crest of Johann Valentin Andreae was a St. Andrew's cross and four red roses, and the same cross is conspicuous on the arms of the town of St. Albans.

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\*See *Francis Bacon's Personal Life Story*.

†See *John Evelyn*, by Arthur Ponsonby (London, 1933).



St. Alban was born at Verulam of a noble family. He journeyed to Rome where he served for seven years as a legionnaire under the Emperor Diocletian. Returning to Britain, he was converted to the Christian faith by the monk Amphibalus of Caerleon (Camelot); and, in the tenth, and last, persecution of the Christians, he was beheaded 303 A. D. Albanus was the first to suffer martyrdom for the Christian faith in Britain. The account of his death appears in the writings of the Venerable Bede. The Roman Governor, learning that Albanus was protecting a Christian monk in his house, sent a troop of soldiers to arrest Amphibalus. In this emergency, Albanus put on the cloak of his guest and gave himself to the soldiers, thus permitting the holy man to escape. For this offense and for his unwillingness to renounce his faith, Albanus was executed. His death was accompanied by miraculous occurrences, and his memory was widely venerated. The sacrifice he made was in vain, for Amphibalus was captured and killed a few days later.

The references to St. Alban in the old Masonic records of England include remarkable embellishments of uncertain origin and antiquity. William Preston summarizes the final form of the Masonic versions: "St. Alban was employed by Carausius, to environ the city of Verulam with a wall, and to build for him a splendid palace; and that to reward his diligence in executing these works, the Emperor appointed him steward of his household and chief ruler of the realm. However this may be, from the corroborating testimony of ancient historians, we are assured that this knight was a celebrated architect, and a real encourager of able workmen; it cannot, therefore, be supposed that Freemasonry would be neglected by so eminent a patron."\*

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\*See *Illustrations of Masonry*.

According to the same author, the Emperor Carausius, who, incidentally, was merely a usurper of Britain, highly favored Masons, and appointed Albanus, his well-trusted steward, the principal superintendent of their assembly. "Under his patronage," continues Preston, "lodges and conventions of the Fraternity were formed, and the rites of Masonry regularly practiced. To enable the Masons to hold a general council to establish their own government, and correct errors among them, he granted them a charter, and Albanus to preside over them in person as Grand Master. This worthy knight proved a zealous friend to the Craft, and assisted at the initiation of many persons into the mystery of the order."

Although the martyrdom of St. Alban is sustained by a quantity of traditional history, the Masonic ornamentations are scarcely justified by the conservative account. Albanus was a Roman soldier, possibly an officer, but when he is called a knight, this title seems forced or unwarranted. There is no evidence that the martyr was a celebrated architect or that he was made Grand Master of the stonemasons, even assuming that such guilds existed in England at that time. His building a palace for Carausius, the usurper, and his other achievements as a master artisan are without factual foundation. Had Albanus been a chief ruler of the realm and a favorite of his king, his trial and execution would probably have been averted.

Incidentally, the garment which Albanus wore on the occasion of his arrest was called a *caracalla*, a cloak of wool said to resemble the vestment of old Jewish priests. The original cowl was preserved in the church of Ely in a chest, which was opened during the reign of Edward II, 1300 A. D. With the garment was found a writing which stated: "This is the Caracalla of St. Amphibalus, the monk and preceptor of St. Alban; in which the proto-

martyr of England suffered death, under the cruel persecution of Diocletian against the Christians."

It was Mrs. Potts, in *Francis Bacon and His Secret Society*, who first pointed out the irregularities and inconsistencies in the Masonic legend of St. Alban. England under Carausius did not recognize the sovereignty of Diocletian. If for Amphibalus we substitute the secret priesthood of the Grail Mysteries and the Albigenian heresy, we shall be nearer to the facts. Carausius is a splendid cover for James I, regarded by many of his subjects as without just claim to the crown. Change St. Alban to Viscount St. Albans and shift the time to the first quarter of the 17th century, and the results are most informative.

If Lord Bacon wished to hide his Secret Society or his own place in that Society, what course could be simpler than to cover himself with a *caracalla* of the ancient and venerated martyr? Bacon was a knight before he was elevated to the peerage. He was of noble family, and he presided over a Secret Society. He was the real encourager of able workmen, the chief ruler of the realm by the favor of his king, and a patron of all kinds of learning. After his lordship was created Viscount St. Albans, there appears to have been further manipulation of the legend. The protomartyr was never "next unto the King in authority," but Bacon as High Chancellor occupied this exact position and was virtual ruler of the State. It was also Lord Verulam, and not the Roman soldier, who built a magnificent palace for his king—a temple of learning, which, as James did not hesitate to acknowledge, was the greatest ornament of his nation.

### *Eighteenth-Century Masonic Revivals of Ancient Mysteries*

At the precise time the mysterious Comte de St.-Germain was traveling about Europe as an agent of the Knights



Templars, a number of cabalistic, philosophic, and mystical systems of degrees and rites emerged to confuse the historians of the Masonic descent. Like the manuscript, *La Tres Sainte Trinosopie*, traditionally attributed to St.-Germain, and other fragments associated with the Comte's secret meetings on the estate of the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, many of these strange rituals were patterned upon the Greek and Egyptian Mysteries. Some were directly inspired by the heresy of Manes.\*

Even while strange rites were developing within Freemasonry itself, independent enterprises came into existence outside the Order, and several of these sought refuge under the broad wing of Masonry when trouble threatened. The clandestine Lodges went so far in some cases as to attempt the complete domination of Continental Masonry. In the confusion that resulted, many useful landmarks were obliterated and much valuable information was lost. The common denominator of the pseudoesoteric Societies was elaborate ritualism. The frenzied dilettanti were initiated by fantastic rites into bizarre Orders that promised much, collected high fees, and bestowed nothing. It was a day of dupes and disappointments, of large promises and small fulfillments.

In addition to its Masonic interests, Europe was still dominated by the Hermetic speculations which had intrigued the minds of the 17th-century intelligentsia. To a degree, Freemasonry was regarded as a conglomerate of older Societies and the heir to their secret operations and public projects.

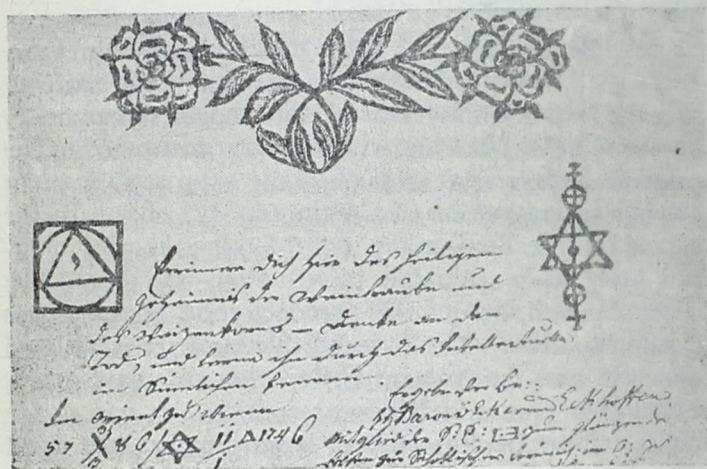
The condition in Germany was typical. Secret Societies of all kinds—religious, philosophical, political, and social—abounded. Most of these organizations were short-lived

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\*See Section I, *Orders of the Quest*.

and of limited membership, but the atmosphere of mystery that surrounded each was pregnant with consequences. The lack of political unity among the German States was partly responsible for the conspiracies originating in the closed lodge rooms of some of these Fraternities.

A fraudulent Rosicrucian group that flourished for a time in Italy presented a strangle cord to each of its initiates with the solemn injunction that the Frater was to use this



—From a Masonic Friendship Album

THE AUTOGRAPH AND ROSICRUCIAN CIPHERS OF  
BARON VON ECKER UND ECKHOFFEN,  
THE ELDER

cord upon himself rather than reveal the priceless secrets of the Lodge. It was unlikely that any member was driven to this extremity, as he could take all the degrees without discovering anything worth concealing or revealing. All he had to show for his original investment was an elaborate parchment covered with cabalistic designs and illegible signatures.

Baron Ecker und Eckhoffen, the elder, was among those imposed upon by pseudo-Rosicrucian Orders doing a flourishing business in fees and special expenses. The Baron, a sincere and lovable intellectual, was lured on by frequent promises that the higher grades would reveal all. He ascended to the top of the ritualistic ladder only to find that it ended in empty space. The Society with which the good baron was affiliated had branches in many European cities and claimed a wide sphere of influence. He took his disillusionment seriously, and under the pseudonym, Magister Pianco, wrote a scathing expose in High German, titled *Der Rosenkreuzer in seiner Blöße* (*The Rosicrucian in his Nakedness*). Magister Pianco complained that he and thousands of others seeking wisdom had been subjected to the vilest possible impostures. The baron was profoundly confused. There was so much of beauty in the old symbols, so much of legendry and lore derived from ancient authorities, and so many solemn and majestic rituals that it seemed impossible that all could be false. Somewhere the true wisdom of antiquity must have been preserved. There was nothing to do but to seek further, so the baron continued his quest, the result of which unhappily has not been recorded.

Most of the spurious groups followed a general pattern. A few distinguished patrons, selected from the aristocracy and the sciences, were induced to lend the prestige of their names and stations. A genteel membership was then quietly solicited, limited by an exorbitant fee of initiation to those in prosperous circumstances. Most of the victims were too chagrined to publicize their own stupidity by exposing the frauds of which they had been the dupes, and, of course, they could not reveal the true state of affairs without compromising illustrious and respected persons. So the disillusioned ex-members nursed their



grievances in private or, still hopeful of better fortune, cast their lot with other cults making attractive pretensions.

The prestige and wealth accumulated by Secret Societies have sometimes been used as political weapons. This often happened even without the knowledge or consent of the membership. Groups, supposedly seeking only universal wisdom, conspired against the State, unseated rulers, and went so far as to sponsor anarchy. A network of private agencies thus came into existence, which could be used according to the tempers of leaders whose true motives were unknown or uncertain. Literally hundreds of these independent movements, all claiming an ancient and honorable history, converged upon the Masonic Grand Lodges at a time when Masonry was struggling to clarify its own position.

Secret organizations of one kind or another were both expedient and fashionable. Almost any subject suitable for group discussion, from chemistry to cosmic consciousness and from legal reform to literary criticism, required a mystical Order or an esoteric reading circle for its very existence. Well-intentioned intellectuals could not gather to discuss Boethius, Boehme, or Bacon without the paraphernalia of red-plush curtains, high altars, secret grips, and mystic passwords. Humorous works appeared ridiculing this fashion. One of these explained how the members of a dining circle had to pass through an elaborate series of contortions, including darkened chambers and fiery ordeals, in order to assemble for a quiet dinner of potted chicken.

A Masonic congress was convened at Wilhelmsbad in 1782, under the presidency of the Duke of Brunswick, to end the discord among the various groups of German Freemasons and related Orders. This conference examined the records of several Grand Lodges which claimed to

possess the secrets of the higher degrees of Freemasonry. The secrets were not discovered, but the controversial issue as to whether Masonry was to be considered a continuation of the Order of the Knights Templars was decided by a negative vote after thirty sittings.

In the last quarter of the 18th century, the public mind, more and more disillusioned in its quest for mystic lore, turned its attention to the pressing problems of social reform and representative government. Esoteric Orders with interest beyond the imminent continued to exist, but were reserved for the edification of small groups of thoughtful scholars, and these made little effort to attract public attention. Freemasonry, integrating its internal structure, gathered the remnants and records of the earlier exuberations, pronounced the irregular rites to be extinct, and retired the magnificent vellum "Charges" as literary curiosities.

Space permits only a brief survey of this remarkable restoration of pagan esoteric doctrines. The situation was partly due to increasing skepticism among intellectuals, which resulted from the broadening sphere of scientific influence and partly from the deepening conviction that the clergy was in conspiracy with the aristocracy to perpetuate the serfdom of the masses. One expression of the general discontent was an effort to restore the Mystery system as a means for accomplishing educational reform. The lack of esoteric content in the orthodox degrees of 18th-century Freemasonry also supplied incentive to enrich the mystical overtones of the accepted symbols and ceremonies.

The Rite of Perfection, or Rite of Heredom, was established by the Chevalier de Bonneville in the College of Jesuits of Clermont in Paris, in 1754. The College of Clermont was the asylum of those adhering to the party

of Stuart, and therefore the rite is said to have been strongly colored by the political prejudices and peculiarities of the Stuart cause. The Rite of Perfection consisted of twenty-five degrees, which may be recognized as the same as those of the Council of Emperors of the East and West. These degrees, so far as they go, reappear in the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite. General Pike tells us that this Rite succeeded the Council of Emperors and inherited the principal distinguishing concept which dominated the Rite of Perfection. This concept, which also passed into the Rite of Strict Observance, held that Freemasonry was derived from Templarism and that consequently every Freemason was a Knight Templar. Standard Masonic histories enlarge upon this theme to the average reader's satisfaction.

Martines de Pasqually was a man of considerable learning who had traveled widely in the Near East, having visited Turkey, Arabia, and Palestine. He founded the Rite of Elected Cohens in 1754. After his death, a number of his papers and manuscripts descended rather circuitously and were examined by Dr. Gerard Encausse (Papus) in 1895. Pasqually believed in the inspiration of the Scriptures, the downfall of the angels, the theory of original sin, and the doctrine of justification by faith. He held that man existed in an elemental state long before the creation detailed in Genesis, and was gradually evolved into his present form.

Louis Claude de Saint-Martin (1743-1803), French mystic and ritualist, was known as "le philosophe inconnu," and his works were published under this pseudonym. Saint-Martin came of a family of wealth and gentle breeding. His mother died when he was a small child, but he had a most generous and indulgent stepmother. He was educated in law at the College de Pontlevoy. Though physical-



ly frail and given to mental pursuits, he decided to change his career and selected the profession of soldiering. Before entering the army, he became a Freemason, and even as a young man was devoted to the study of religious philosophy.

While his regiment was stationed at Bordeaux, he contacted the new system of Masonic rites which had been introduced by Martines de Pasqually. Saint-Martin was initiated into the Elected Priesthood in 1768, and amplified his learning by an intensive reading of Swedenborg. In 1771, he resigned from the army to become a teacher and leader in the field of mysticism. He traveled considerably, and his ideas were received with enthusiasm. "It is to Martines de Pasqually," says Saint-Martin, "that I owe my introduction to the higher truth." The Elected Priesthood then consisted of seven grades, of which the seventh was a grade of Rose Croix. No details of the working of this grade appear to have survived. Ceremonial magic may have been included in the work of Pasqually, and there are references to the teachings of Boehme and the spiritualistic productions of Dr. John Dee. Apparently, psychic phenomena were included in the early Martinist movement.

Although Saint-Martin had been raised a strict Catholic and always remained sympathetic to the Church, his first work, *Of Errors and Truth*, was placed on the Index. Saint-Martin's ideal society was "a natural and spiritual theocracy," in which God would raise up men of mark, who would regard themselves strictly as "divine commissioners" to guide the people.

The writings of Saint-Martin were brought to the consideration of Voltaire. In 1787, Saint-Martin went to Italy with Prince Galitzin, then journeyed to Strasbourg, where he further studied the writings of Boehme, trans-

lating parts of them into French. Back in Paris, he was arrested during the Revolution simply because he was a gentleman by birth. His affiliations with the Freemasons saved him from the Reign of Terror. He visited London, where he remained for several months, made the acquaintance of the astronomer, Herschel, and contacted the writings of William Law, the great interpreter of Boehme. Saint-Martin never married, but had a wide circle of friends and admirers, including many of the leaders of the intellectual world. The central concept of Saint-Martin's mystical philosophy is that man remains divine in spite of the "fall" reported in the Scriptures. Within the human being lies dormant a high spiritual quality of which man is not always conscious, and which he must develop or release by freeing himself from the illusion of materialism. Saint-Martin died suddenly, presumably of a stroke while at prayer.

There is considerable doubt as to the place of Baron Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772) in the direct stream of Masonic descent. Samuel Beswick\* affirmed that the baron, when about eighteen years of age, was initiated for the first time into the mysteries of Freemasonry at Lund, the capital of Scomen, the most southern province of Sweden. Later, he joined or affiliated with the Stockholm Chapter. Beswick noted that it was not uncommon to accept minors into the Lodges at that time, giving the example that George Washington was initiated before attaining his majority. It has been pointed out in the same work that the French scientist, De Lalande, invited Swedenborg to visit the Lodge of the Nine Sisters in Paris, and that the baron was present at least once while De Lalande was Worshipful Master.

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\*See *Swedenborg Rite and the Great Masonic Leaders of the 18th Century* (New York, 1870).

Most Masonic historians doubt that Swedenborg was ever regularly initiated, but there is evidence in his writings that he was aware of the principal symbols used in Masonry, and Freemasons of the higher degrees certainly gathered inspiration and comfort from his mystical philosophy. The Abbe Pernetty (1716-1800) has been given credit for the



—From the *Mirroure of Maestie* (London, 1616)

#### THE COURT OF THE MUSES

The nine sisters and a tenth figure representing Apollo are in attendance upon a throned and sceptered ruler, the personification of harmony and wit. Pegasus, standing upon the Parnassian hill, brings forth with the stroke of his hoof the streams of art and sacred skill. In the Thespian Spring, thirty-two swans (poets or pens) sing their sad epodes. Compare this seal of Bacon's literary society with the plate of Apollo on Parnassus, *Orders of the Quest*, page 48.

integration of Swedenborg's abstract speculations into what has been called a Theosophico-Masonic system. Among those influenced by Swedenborg's elaborate extrasensory researches must be included Cagliostro, Mesmer, Saint-Martin, and Zinendorf.



The unsavory Abbe Barruel claimed that he associated intimately with the members of the Theosophical Illuminati at Wilhelmsbad. He said that these brethren were originally all Swedenborgians and were at first distinct from the followers or adepts of Weishaupt. Later, they fraternized intimately.

The Swedenborgian Rite seems to have opened its first Lodge in Stockholm between 1750 and 1755. For reasons of safety or secrecy, no exact records were kept. Another Lodge was later opened in Berlin under the auspices of the King of Prussia. At the suggestion of Prince Charles, Swedenborg sent two copies of his *Apocalypsis Revelata* to Cardinal Prince de Rohan in 1766, and three years later, when the baron was in Paris, Prince de Rohan visited him. The cardinal was a Mason, for he was one of the signers of the patent given to Stephen Morin, appointing him Inspector-General of the Lodges, etc., in all parts of the New World.

It is significant that Voltaire should devote time and research to defending the Manichaeans from the early attacks of St. Augustine. Fortunatus publicly challenged St. Augustine, as one who had assisted in the rituals of the sect, to declare openly and before the whole population as to whether any part of the Manichaean worship was impure or obscene. St. Augustine evaded the issue and tried to shift the argument from morals to death. At last, however, pressed by Fortunatus, he said grudgingly: "I acknowledge that in the prayer at which I assisted, I did not see you commit anything impure." The learned M. de Beausobre shrewdly observed that it would be impossible to reconcile the saint's misgivings with the simple fact that Augustine himself remained for years a devotee of the Manichaean sect without, apparently, coming upon anything in their practices which offended his morals.

Voltaire enlarged this discussion with many choice quotations and observations, and by his attitude aligned himself with the revival of the philosophy of Manes, which was behind and beneath most of the political and ethical Secret Societies of 18th-century Europe. Voltaire was initiated into Freemasonry the year of his death. He became a member of the Lodge of the Nine Sisters (Muses) at Paris, the 7th day of February 1778. This Lodge was remarkable both for the quality of its initiates and for its direct influence upon developments of the Great Work in the Western Hemisphere. Voltaire died May 30, 1778, and a Lodge of Sorrow was held in his memory on the 28th of November of the same year. His heart was removed from the body at the time of embalming and preserved in a silver case. Nearly seventy years after his death, the sarcophagus in the Pantheon was opened so that the heart could be placed with the rest of the remains, but the tomb was found to be empty.

The initiation of Voltaire into the Masonic Order only a few months before his decease is in startling contrast to the legend of his final reconciliation with the Church. Legends circulated at the time that he died repenting his impiety appear to have been inventions of his enemies. His last words were a request, rather petulantly stated, that he be left alone to die in peace. Voltaire was well-acquainted with the esoteric teachings of the Mysteries and was deeply involved in the processes of social reformation then operating in France.

In 1839, a French Mason, Brother E. J. Marconis de Negre, instituted the Rite of Memphis, which Ragon believed to have been inspired by the extinct Rite of Mizraim. The new Rite, which worked ninety or more degrees, was not acknowledged among the systems acceptable to the Grand Orient of France until 1862. To accomplish

this favorable relationship with the French Grand Orient, Marconis, who was then the Grand Hierophant, was obliged to divest himself of all authority over the Rite and to accept complete "obedience" to the Grand Orient of France. This august body retired all the higher degrees as Masonic curiosities, and the initiates of the Rite were not permitted to claim any higher degree than that of Master Mason.

According to Marconis, the Rite of Memphis was brought to Europe by Ormus, an Egyptian priest and sage of Alexandria who was converted by St. Mark in 46 A. D., and who purified the Egyptian doctrine according to Christian principles. Manes was also involved, and the stand taken by Marconis was the same as that presented in the *Orders of the Quest*. The adept tradition was preserved by the followers of Ormus until the year 1150 A. D., when eighty-one of these initiates went to Sweden, presented themselves to the Archbishop of Usal, explained their Masonic doctrines to him, and established Masonry in Europe. The leader of these knights was Garimont, apparently a corruption of Garimond, the mysterious patriarch of Jerusalem, before whom the Hospitalers are said to have taken their vows of obedience, chastity, and poverty.

The legend of the eighty-one Masons, or brethren, visiting Sweden has been dismissed as "absurd," but appears less unreasonable when the existence of an esoteric tradition behind Freemasonry is recognized. Certainly, the Sanctuary of Memphis was dedicated to the same sublime work that has activated the Mysteries and Secret Societies of all enlightened nations. Of this, Marconis wrote in his "Discourse of Esoteric Masonry:" "The statute of Isis, always veiled even to the priests, and the sphinx crouching at the door of the temple in an attitude of repose and silence, were the two emblems of these lost secrets; and this conduct of the trustees of the mysteries was dictated by the



highest wisdom. The despotic rule of strong violent men extended over the whole earth. Everywhere the inexorable 'vae victis' was the only international and political law; everywhere heads had to bow or were crushed. It is easily understood from this that the trustees of the primitive knowledge of human grandeur, of its sublime dignity, of its equality before the Creator, of its inalterable liberty, were forced to hide their treasure, and to communicate it only to those who were found to be worthy, for before communicating it, they had to be certain that the new candidate did not intend to sell the knowledge to their enemies."

Among the apocrypha of the Rite is one relating to the initiation of Plato into the Mysteries of Memphis. It appears in *Egypt in the 19th Century*, by M. Ed. Guoin. According to this graceful fiction, a pilgrim identified with Plato came to the banks of the Nile just before the 95th Olympiad. He sought initiation, and underwent trials in dark caverns under the earth. Three men with helmet's representing the heads of dogs guarded a door of iron. They warned him of the dangers ahead, but the neophyte pressed on, passing through frightful experiences, until he finally came to a room lighted by hundreds of torches, where sat sixty priests robed in fine linen and wearing the insignia of their ranks. Initiation was followed by a retreat of eighty-one days, and later there were six months of study devoted to the sacred sciences. The initiate then took an oath of silence and was acknowledged as one of the Sacred College.

From this and similar statements it is evident that Marconis, like many other Masonic innovators of the period, was convinced that Masonry was in some way the continuation of ancient mystical Societies dedicated to the enlargement of the human estate. If he fashioned upon the

foundations of the Rite of Mizraim, Mackenzie has pointed out that Lechangeur, credited with the rituals of Mizraim, merely appropriated his material from the Egyptian Masonry of Cagliostro. To press the matter further is to be confronted with other Masonic difficulties. Brother Cagliostro (Esperance Lodge, No. 289, London) is described by some as heir, through the Jesuits, to information which they had filched from the Rosicrucians. It is all exceedingly complicated, but the essential principles remain unchanged and the formula is repeated so frequently that one may suggest that the presence of so much smoke indicates some fire.

### *The Rite of Strict Observance*

In 1754, Carl Gotthelf von Hund, claiming authority from *Superiores Incogniti* (Unknown Superiors), established the Rite of Strict Observance. Von Hund was initiated into the mysteries of Freemasonry in the Lodge of the Three Thistles at Frankfort-on-the-Main, probably in 1742. Albert Mackey declared that two things relating to von Hund had been well-settled. First, he was initiated as a Knight Templar in 1743; second, at the same time he received the appointment of a Provincial Grand Master with ample powers to propagate the Order in Germany.

It has been suggested that the Unknown Superiors, who authorized the Rite of Strict Observance, were Knights Templars, although there has been considerable controversy among orthodox Masonic historians as to the survival of any organizing body of Templars at so late a date. It is unwise to follow the thinking of certain other students of the higher degrees who consider the Rite of Strict Observance to be merely a Jesuit mechanism attempting to undermine Freemasonry by holding out promises of a

restoration of the temporal powers and worldly treasures of the Order of the Temple. After all, von Hund was a staunch Protestant and at one time financed the erection of a Protestant church. Equally unsatisfactory is the effort to identify the Rite of Strict Observance with the ill-fated family of the Stuarts. The Jacobite cause held passing interest for some members of the Rite; but even on his deathbed, Baron von Hund reiterated the truth of his original claim that he was the agent of the Unknown Superiors, and there seems no reason to doubt his integrity.

The existence of a Secret Order of Templars at the time under consideration was defended by Cadet Gassicourt in his book, *Le Tombeau de Jacques Molai*, Paris, 1796. He said that the celebrated adept, M. de St.-Germain, was traveling in Leipzig and Dresden under the name of Comte Weldon, establishing communication between the Lodges of Masonry and the Templars, of which he was an emissary. In his letter to Count Gortz, St.-Germain says: "At the present moment I have promised to visit Hanau, to meet the Landgrave Karl at his brother's and work out with him the system of the 'strict Observance'—the regeneration of the order of freemasons in an aristocratic sense—which interests you too so much."

Albert Pike, in his *Morals and Dogma*, states emphatically: "Cagliostro was the Agent of the Templars, and therefore wrote to the Free-Masons of London that the time had come to begin the work of rebuilding the Temple of th Eternal. He had introduced into Masonry a new Rite called the *Egyptian*, and endeavored to resuscitate the mysterious worship of Isis. The three letters L. ' . P. ' . D. ' . on his seal, were the initials of the words '*Lilia pedibus destrue;*' tread under foot the Lilies [of France], and a Masonic medal of the sixteenth or seventeenth century has



upon it a sword cutting off the stalk of a lily, and the words '*talem dabit ultio messem*,' such harvest revenge will give."

Deschamps, in his *Les Societes Secretes, etc.*, Paris, 1881, wrote that St.-Germain was a Knight Templar, and that the ritual used in the Theosophical Lodge, which the Comte had established in the castle of Ermenonville, was the ritual of the Knights Templars. In *Franc-Maconnerie*, the Baron du Potet stated that this castle, which was thirty miles from Paris, belonged to the Marquis de Garadin, the friend and protector of Jean Jacques Rousseau.

A description of the initiation of the Count and Countess di Cagliostro into St.-Germain's Lodge of Illuminists appeared in *Memoires Authentique pour Servir a l'Histoire du Comte de Cagliostro*. This work was published anonymously in 1785, but is generally attributed to the Marquis du Luchet. Mr. Waite, as always, dismissed the entire account as a "comedy." We differ from this learned gentleman on the grounds that the circumstances are far from humorous. Du Luchet, who certainly was not present, may have received an unreliable description of what actually occurred, and, in turn, due to personal prejudices, contributed his own variations upon the theme.

According to this account, Cagliostro had requested the favor of a secret audience in order that he might pay homage to the "God of the Faithful." St.-Germain set the time at 2 A. M. The drawbridge was lowered for the Cagliostros' reception, and they were led into a dimly lighted room. Suddenly, two massive doors opened and a sanctuary resplendent with thousands of lighted candles dazzled their vision. On an altar in the midst of the room sat the mysterious St.-Germain. At his feet knelt two acolytes holding golden bowls of perfume. The "God of the Faithful" wore upon his chest a pectoral of diamonds

of such brilliance that the eye could scarcely bear their radiance.

A voice inquired from the visitors who they were, where they came from, and what they wanted. Cagliostro and his wife knelt before the altar, and after a long pause Cagliostro gave this short address in a low voice: "I come to invoke the God of the Faithful, the Son of Nature, the Father of Truth. I come to ask one of the fourteen thousand and seven secrets that he bears in his bosom. I come to give myself up as his slave, his apostle, his martyr."

Later in the same ritual, a mysterious book was opened and Cagliostro listened while his own future was read to him, with a detailed description of his persecution, trial, dishonor, and imprisonment. On this occasion St.-Germain assumed a most exalted role. He was personally venerated by his followers and actually worshiped as a god. This Illuminist ritual revealed St.-Germain in his full splendor as a Sovereign Prince of the Philosophic Empire. The entire account, including du Luchet's grotesque and completely false conclusions, was intended to imply a restoration of the secret rites of the Knights Templars. Cagliostro acknowledged himself as a disciple of the far more astute and skillful Hermetic adept. There is no doubt that Cagliostro's voluntary sacrifice of himself and his reputation at the psychological moment directed the attention of the Inquisition from the principal activities of the Unknown Superiors, referred to by von Hund. Even St.-Germain's reputation has suffered considerably from the pens of uninitiated historians. Of the Comte, H. P. Blavatsky writes: "The treatment this great man, this pupil of Indian and Egyptian hierophants, this proficient in the secret wisdom of the East, has had from Western writers, is a stigma upon human nature."\* In the same article, she mentioned

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\*See *A Modern Panarion*.

Alessandro di Cagliostro as one whose name has been made the synonym of infamy by a forged biography.

It is incredible in the light of the events of history that the Rite of Strict Observance could have been under the wing of the most celebrated of all the European adepts, the Comte de St.-Germain, and at the same time have been a contrivance of the Jesuits. It seems wiser to assume that the Unknown Superiors, to whom von Hund gave such faithful allegiance, belonged to the same body of initiates responsible for the appearance of such men as St.-Germain and Cagliostro.

After the death of Baron von Hund, his Masonic activities came under the general leadership of the Grand Duke of Brunswick, one of St.-Germain's more intimate friends. Among the Comte's associates in Vienna was the eccentric Count J. F. von Kufstein, reported to have been a Rosicrucian, who had a Lodge in the house of Prince Auersperg where mysterious meetings were held late at night. St.-Germain was present at one or more of these secret sessions. While in Vienna, he also assisted Dr. Franz Anton Mesmer in his researches in animal magnetism. At this time, the remarkable Comte was known as the "American of the Felderhof."

That St.-Germain was a Freemason cannot be doubted, and, for a time at least, he conducted his own Lodge in Paris. The catalogue of the Masonic library of the Grand Orient of France lists, under item N. 498, the register of the *Loge du Contrat Social de St. Jean d'Ecosse*. This register, covering the period from 1775 to 1789, includes the signatures of both St.-Germain and Rousseau. Mrs. Cooper-Oakley,\* quoting the late librarian of the Great Ambrosiana Library at Milan, says: "And when, in order

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\*See *The Comte de St.-Germain*, by Isabel Cooper-Oakley.



to bring about a conciliation between the various sects of the Rosicrucians, the Necromantists, the Cabalists, the Illuminati, the Humanitarians, there was held a great Congress at Wilhelmsbad, then in the Lodge of the 'Amici riuniti' there was also Cagliostro, with St. Martin, Mesmer and Saint-Germain." It is not likely that St.-Germain would have been a representative of French Masonic groups without himself being a member of the Order.

Among those who came within the auras of St.-Germain and Cagliostro was the Chevalier Casanova de Seingalt, who was made a Mason at Lyons in 1758. Even this adventurer held Masonry in considerable esteem, though he was convinced that most initiates of the Order did not understand its true mysteries. In spite of the defects of his own character, Casanova respected the learning and integrity without which the Great Work of the Craft could not be accomplished.

The acquaintance between St.-Germain and the Marquis de Lafayette was strengthened by their participation in the activities of the Lodge of the Nine Sisters. Benjamin Franklin was elected honorary Grand Master of this Lodge and later directed the initiation of Voltaire.

General Pike points out that at this critical period in Masonic history at least eight hundred degrees of one kind or another were invented. "The rituals even of the respectable Degrees," he writes, "copied and mutilated by ignorant men, became nonsensical and trivial; and the words so corrupted that it has hitherto been found impossible to recover many of them at all. . . . Hence it was that, practically, the largest portion of the Degrees claimed by the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, and before it by the Rite of Perfection, fell into disuse, were merely communicated, and their rituals became jejune and insignifi-

cant. These Rites resembled those old palaces and baronial castles, the different parts of which, built at different periods remote from one another, upon plans and according to tastes that greatly varied, formed a discordant and incongruous whole."

Not enough consideration has been given to this apparently spontaneous and profuse growth of degrees. Most of the men responsible for these strange rites were suspected or even convicted of esoteric inclinations and associations. A mutual friendship and admiration existed among them, and their names occur together in a variety of curious patterns. Most of them were dedicated to the restoration of the esoteric tradition and its perpetuation under the symbolism of the pagan Mysteries of antiquity.

These initiates were closely linked with some sovereign well be referred to as the Unknown Superiors. Elements of neo-Egyptian religion and philosophy in terms of prevailing body of descent which, for want of clearer definition, could opinions upon these recondite subjects were everywhere present. Under the pressure of these mystical imponderables, the house of Freemasonry appeared for a time to be divided against itself. One part, which was rapidly to disappear from public admiration, was dedicated to the perpetuation of the secret doctrine and to the fulfillment of the Great Work of the initiated builders. The other part, which was to emerge and to assume domination over the Craft, was resolved to sever all connections with the esoteric systems of initiation and to advance Masonry as an essentially fraternal organization. In what has been referred to as "the sober light of the 19th century," transcendentalism fell into disrepute, and Freemasonry, at least for a time and at least by appearances, disclaimed its ancient heritage.

The Rite of Strict Observance was for all practical purposes destroyed by the very forces which had been falsely credited with its formation. The disintegrating agent operated through Johann August von Starck, who attempted to impose the domination of the clergy upon the Rite. This clerical group finally succeeded, and the Lodges of Strict Observance afterwards called themselves the United German Lodges.

### *The Illuminati*

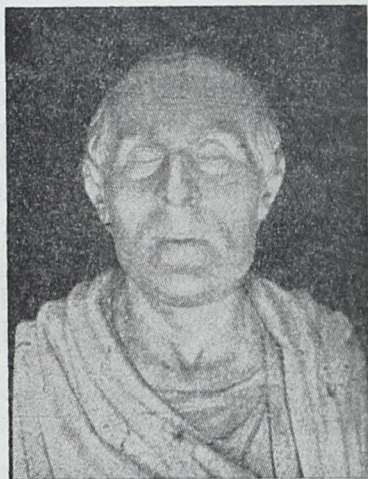
The name Illuminati has been assumed by, or bestowed upon, various groups of mystics and metaphysical intellectualists claiming to possess an internal enlightenment about divine or human matters. A number of sects may be included under this general title, as the Alumbrados of Spain and the Guerinets of France. In the present usage, however, the name Illuminati is most often applied to the Order founded in Bavaria, in 1776, by Adam Weishaupt. This movement was regarded with favor by a number of brilliant and outstanding men, including Goethe, Herder, Nicolai, Ernest II of Gotha, and Karl August of Weimar.

Adam Weishaupt was born at Ingolstadt on February 6, 1748, and departed from this life at Gotha in 1830. His father died when the boy was only seven years old, and his godfather, Baron Ickstatt, entrusted the early training of the lad to the Jesuits. The baron had an excellent personal library, well-stocked with works by French philosophers belonging to the school of "reason." Weishaupt believed that he found in these writings answers to the doubts and misgivings which he entertained over certain dogmas of his Jesuit tutors.

After graduating from the University of Ingolstadt in 1768, the young man served as a tutor and catechist until



he was appointed as assistant instructor in 1772. As a protege of Baron Ickstatt, who had large influence in the university, Weishaupt advanced rapidly and received the chair of canon law in 1773, a seat which had traditionally belonged to the Jesuits for nearly a century. Two years later, the promising young professor was made dean of the faculty of law, assuming this heavy responsibility in the educational sphere when but twenty-seven years old. Weis-



—From *The Occult Review*

ADAM WEISHAUP

haupt married in 1773, against the wishes of his godfather, and their friendship was never restored.

There can be no doubt that Dean Weishaupt found himself in the midst of scholastic plotting and counterplotting. To him, the campus of the university was a microcosm of the world, and the conspiracies which flourished in the school symbolized the larger strife between reactionary and progressive factions. Although his motives and manners

have been subjected to repeated criticisms by historians, it only requires brief contact with the modern campus to appreciate the dean's dilemma. Educational politics still flourish at the expense of essential learning, and the condition was much worse at that critical period when ecclesiasticism was fighting to retain its influence in higher education.

The idea of a secret assembly or association to protect the liberals from the conservatives was incubated in the heavy atmosphere of Ingolstadt. The links with the past are obvious. Dr. Vernon Stauffer says of Weishaupt: "His imagination having taken heat from his reflections upon the attractive power of the Eleusinian mysteries and the influence exerted by the secret cult of the Pythagoreans, it was first in Weishaupt's thought to seek in the Masonic institutions of the day the opportunity he coveted for the propagation of his views."\*

Weishaupt founded the Order of the Illuminati on May 1, 1776. The original membership consisted of five persons of resolute purpose but of uncertain method. The following year Weishaupt became a member of the Society of Freemasons and was initiated into the Lodge Theodore of Good Counsel, at Munich. The Lodge was virtually absorbed into the Illuminist Order almost immediately. Early in his career, the Dean of Ingolstadt was fortunate enough to gain the assistance of two important and influential gentlemen. The first was Baron Adolf von Knigge, privy councilor of Saxe-Weimar; the second was Johann Joachim Christoph Bode, a man of upright character, high social position, and cultivated mind. Both von Knigge and Bode were Freemasons.

Baron Knigge was deeply immersed in the activities of Secret Societies, and had joined the Lodge of Strict

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\*See *New England the Bavarian Illuminati* (New York, 1918).

Observance which was dabbling with esoteric and mystical arts. The baron, especially addicted to alchemical speculations, tried to affiliate himself with the existing Rosicrucian groups, but was unable to make a satisfactory alliance—at least, such is the report. Like Knigge, a constant seeker after rare knowledge, Bode came to the Illuminati from the Rite of Strict Observance. He was a musician who turned bookseller, and, as a sideline, translated into German the popular works of Fielding, Smollett, and Goldsmith. Bode had a wide knowledge of Masonic history and the origins of the rites, but he does not appear to have organized his opinions on these subjects.

These three men, Weishaupt, von Knigge, and Bode, fashioned a Secret Society, patterned upon the rites and rituals of ancient Mysteries and dedicated to the perpetuation of esoteric knowledge and the social improvement of their fellow men. The Illuminist Order never attracted a large membership. Historians hazard the guess that its strength did not exceed two thousand heads at any time, but they were distinguished heads. The role of membership is reminiscent of the *Almanach de Gotha*. A considerable percentage of the Brothers were men of consequence, including reigning princes, noblemen, prominent educators, scholars, scientists, and men of letters. Most of these intellectuals were addicted, at least in private, to the opinions expressed so eloquently by Rousseau and Voltaire.

Certainly there was an undercurrent of things esoteric, in the most mystical sense of that word, beneath the surface of Illuminism. In this respect, the Order followed exactly in the footsteps of the Knights Templars. The Templars returned to Europe after the Crusades, bringing with them a number of choice fragments of Oriental occult lore, some of which they had gathered from the Druses of Lebanon,



and some from the disciples of Hasan Ibn-al-Sabbah, the old wizard of Mount Alamut.

If there was a deep mystical current flowing beneath the surface of Illuminism, it is certain that Weishaupt was not the Castalian Spring. Perhaps the lilies of the Illuminati and the roses of the Rosicrucians were, by a miracle of Nature, flowing upon the same stem. The old symbolism would suggest this, and it is not always wise to ignore ancient landmarks. There is only one explanation that meets the obvious and natural requirements of the known facts. The Illuminati were part of an esoteric tradition which had descended from remote antiquity and had revealed itself for a short time among the Humanists of Ingolstadt. One of the blossoms of the "sky plant" was there, but the roots were afar in better ground.

Weishaupt emerged as a faithful servant of a higher cause. Behind him moved the intricate machinery of the Secret Schools. As usual, they did not trust their full weight to any perishable institution. The physical history of the Bavarian Illuminati extended over a period of only twelve years. It is difficult to understand, therefore, the profound stir which this movement caused in the political life of Europe. We are forced to the realization that this Bavarian group was only one fragment of a large and composite design.

All efforts to discover the members of the higher grades of the Illuminist Order have been unsuccessful. It has been customary, therefore, to assume that these higher grades did not exist except in the minds of Weishaupt and von Knigge. Is it not equally possible that a powerful group of men, resolved to remain entirely unknown, moved behind Weishaupt and pushed him forward as a screen for its own activities?

The ideals of Illuminism, as they are found in the pagan Mysteries of antiquity, were old when Weishaupt was born, and it is unlikely that these long-cherished convictions perished with his Bavarian experiment. The work that was unfinished in 1785 remains unfinished in 1950. Esoteric Orders will not become extinct until the purpose which brought them into being has been fulfilled. Organizations may perish, but the Great School is indestructible.

Of passing interest is the crusade of the Reverend Jedediah Morse of Charleston, South Carolina, against the threat of an Illuminist invasion of the United States. Capitalizing on the proclamation issued by President John Adams, March 23, 1798, referring to the hazardous and afflictive position in which the country had been placed, the Rev. Morse preached with great fervor against the atheistic French State and its determination to corrupt the morals of the Western Hemisphere. A minor tempest followed, both sides of the issue resolute but uninformed. The Illuminati were presented as a huge association of godless persons determined to destroy the Church and State.

Rev. Morse depended largely upon certain memoirs of Jacobinism invented and compiled by Abbe Barruel, and the attacks on Freemasons, the Illuminati, and the Reading Societies by Dr. John Robison. This learned doctor should have limited his interests to his chosen fields of hydrodynamics, astronomy, electricity, and magnetism. His readings in Freemasonry seem to have undermined his critical faculties, for he decided that an association had been formed for the express purpose of corrupting all the religious establishments and existing governments of Europe. This group was the Illuminati, which had apparently been disbanded, but actually had extended its activities throughout the whole world.

In the ensuing flurry, a number of excited clergymen quoted each other and sometimes themselves to prove the horrible hazards of the hour. George Washington was cited, Mr. Noah Webster orated, and politicians warned their constituents that opposing candidates were probably Illuminists in disguise. Of course, Thomas Paine and Thomas Jefferson received appropriate criticism, and it was even suggested that the American Society of United Irishmen was subversive. Masonic Lodges were suspected of deep and dark doings, in spite of the fact that most of the patriots of the Revolutionary period, including General Warren, who fell at Bunker Hill, and George Washington, were Freemasons of standing and reputation.

Actually, the Illuminist bubble was little better than a clerical hysteria, and there is no proof that there was any substance beneath the extravagant reports. If European Secret Societies of the period exercised an influence in the young American Republic, such influence certainly was not malevolent. The results, if any, are found in the separation of the State and Church, a clear-cut policy in American government. George Washington stated firmly that he did not believe that doctrines of the Illuminati or principles of Jacobianism had spread in the United States. At the same time, he defended the integrity of the Masonic Lodges of his country.

Among those who had received initiation into the school of Martines de Pasqually was Jacques Cazotte (1720-1792), usually included among the 18th-century Rosicrucians. About 1775 he embraced the tenets and projects of the Illuminati. In his work, *Le Diable Amoureux*, Cazotte wrote profoundly of secret matters, and was accused of exposing information about the adept tradition without authority. He was among the victims of the French Revolution and was executed on September 25 at the Place



du Carrousel. He was certainly in favor of broad reforms involving the rights of the people, but was not by nature or inclination given to violence or fanatical procedures.

Jean Francois de la Harpe, French critic and man of letters, was a follower of the new philosophy and supported the Revolutionists as editor of the *Mercure de France*.



JACQUES CAZOTTE

Like so many of the intelligent liberals, he became himself a victim of the Revolutionary zeal and was imprisoned for some time. As the result of his experience, he became a reactionary and, always more or less an extremist, attacked bitterly that which he had previously defended with equal fervor. He died in 1803, and among his papers

was found the curious *Prophetie de Cazotte*. There is no reason to doubt the authenticity of this somber document.

La Harpe described a banquet of the Academicians held early in the year 1788. It was an illustrious company, including members of the French court, legal lights, and literary men. Present also were a number of ladies of importance. The dinner, enlivened by stories, anecdotes, and witticisms, was dominated by a Voltairian attitude on matters political and theological. The diners finally concluded that an intellectual revolution would soon be complete and that in a few years superstition and fanaticism would give place to philosophy. The various members of the company then conversed pleasantly as to which of them would live to see the Reign of Reason.

During this conversation, one man sat quietly listening, but took no part in the general enthusiasm. It was Jacques Cazotte, his long hair hanging on his shoulders, and his quiet, noble face set in an expression of profound sadness. At last he spoke: "Gentlemen, be satisfied; you will all see this grand and sublime revolution. You know that I am something of a prophet, and I repeat that you will all see it." Cazotte then rose in his place at the table and made the following predictions to the persons of the assemblage:

"You, M. Condorcet, will expire on the pavement of a dungeon; you will die of the poison which you will have taken to escape from the hands of the executioner; of poison, which the happy state of that period will render it absolutely necessary that you should carry about you.

"And you, M. Chamfort, you will cut yourself across the veins with twenty-two strokes of a razor, and will nevertheless survive the attempts for some months.

"You, M. Vicq d'Azyr, you will not open your veins yourself, but you will order them to be opened six times in one day, during the paroxysms of the gout, in order that you may not fail in your purpose, and you will die during the night. As for you, M. de Nicolai, you will die on the scaffold; and so, M. Bailly, will you; and so will you, M. Malesherbes."

M. Roucher rose from his chair, remarking that it appeared that the vengeance of the time was to be leveled solely against the Academy. He then demanded his own fate. Cazotte answered quietly: "You will die also on the scaffold." At this moment, M. de la Harpe, who chronicled the incident, asked: "And what will happen to me?" Cazotte smiled. "You will be yourself a miracle as extraordinary as any which I have told; you will then be a Christian." The Duchess of Grammond remarked that it appeared that chivalry was not at an end. These predictions had not been directed toward the ladies. Cazotte bowed. "Your sex, ladies, will be no guarantee for you in these times. My Lady Duchess, you will be conducted to the scaffold, with several other ladies, in the cart of the executioner, and with your hands tied behind your backs. Greater ladies than you will have the same end. You will not even have a confessor. The last mortal led to the scaffold who will be allowed a confessor will be the King of France."

Consternation broke out in the Assembly, and at last a hesitant voice spoke: "My good prophet, you have been so kind as to tell us all our fortunes, but you have not mentioned your own."

"Then you must know," murmured Cazotte, "that during the siege of Jerusalem, a man for seven days went 'round the ramparts of the city crying in a loud voice, 'Woe to Jerusalem!' and on the seventh day he cried, 'Woe to



Jerusalem and to myself!' and on that very moment an enormous stone thrown by the machine of the enemy dashed him to pieces." M. Cazotte then bowed and departed.

M. de la Harpe made a careful record of the predictions and their fulfillment. He bore witness to the fact that all the prophecies were fulfilled to the smallest detail. It was on his deathbed that he drew up the final statement of the outworking of the strange predictions. M. de la Harpe lived through the Revolution and did become a Christian.

Cazotte's remarkable powers of foreknowledge suggest a more detailed examination of the so-called political Societies and their initiates. Everywhere in the operations of these groups were intimations and indications of an operative transcendentalism. Men like St.-Germain, Saint-Martin, Cagliostro, Mesmer, and Cazotte cannot be explained by calling them shrewd opportunists, impostors, or adventurers. They certainly shared a secret kind of knowledge, and were operating from a plan or trestle board. While this dimension of their activities is denied or ignored we can have no clear picture of the workings of the adept schools in the great century of revolutions.

### *The Life of Sethos*

An esoteric Masonic novel titled *Sethos, histoire ou vie tiree des monumens anecdotes de l'ancienne Egypte*, attributed to the French abbe, Jean Terrasson, was published in Paris in 1731. The following year the work appeared in English as *The Life of Sethos. Taken from Private Memoirs of the Ancient Egyptians. Translated from a Greek Manuscript into French. And now faithfully done into English from the Paris Edition; by Mr. Lediard.*

The preface to the English edition states that the story was derived from a Greek manuscript in the library of a foreign nation, and was published only under the condition that the depository of the original should remain unknown. The Greek author was supposed to have lived in Alexandria during the reign of Marcus Aurelius, but he is not named. *Sethos* was translated into German by Mathias Claudius in 1777.

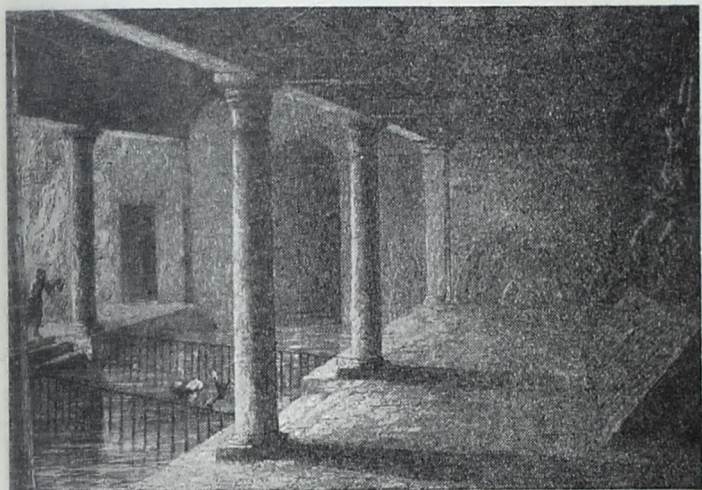
Although this curious book is the product of extensive research and profound erudition, it certainly did not originate in antiquity. It was a complete invention, possibly derived in part from a work on the rituals of initiation by Humberto Malhandrini, published in Venice in 1657. The 18th century was distinguished by several strange pseudo-Egyptian esoteric writings which appear to have originated in some common source.

The *Crata Repoa*, or *Initiations to the Ancient Mysteries of the Priests of Egypt*, made its appearance for the first time in the German edition of 1770, and was published without either the name of the author or the printer. The librarian Stahlbaum published a second edition in Berlin in 1778, declaring that the author of the work was until that time unknown, and that an ineffectual search had been made for him in every corner of Germany. The distinguished scholar Ragon supposed the *Crata Repoa* to be a concoction by learned Germans of all that could be found in ancient writers on initiation.

At this period the Comte de St.-Germain was practicing Masonic or Rosicrucian rituals and Illuministic rites, laden with Egyptian symbolism, in secret rooms and hidden cellars of the palace of Prince Karl of Hesse Cassel at Eckernforde. Count di Cagliostro was perfecting his Egyptian Rite of Freemasonry to the general amazement of the French, and

the extravagant pseudo-Masonic, pseudo-Egyptian Rites of Memphis were attracting wide attention. The genial Court de Gebelin was the outstanding Egyptologist of the French Academy. This distinguished scholar was developing his hypothesis that playing cards were the leaves of a sacred book which had descended from the Egyptians.

A few years later Dupius wrote upon the history of ancient cults and beliefs, Lenoir traced Freemasonic origins



—From *Histoire Pittoresque De La Franc-Maçonnerie* (after Lenoir)

THE TESTS OF FIRE, WATER, AND AIR, ACCORDING TO THE INITIATION  
RITUALS OF THE EGYPTIANS

to the Rites of ancient Memphis, and Ragon explained the symbolism of the Masonic Craft in terms of Greek, Egyptian, and Hindu metaphysics. This sudden increase of the researching instinct along highly specialized lines had but one possible explanation: A definite effort was being made to restore the secret philosophical institutions which had retired into a discreet silence more than fifteen centuries earlier.



Sethos, according to the work bearing his name, was an Egyptian prince born about a hundred years before the Trojan War. The numerous events which made up his alleged life included an elaborate account of initiation into the Mysteries of Isis. The preliminary trials of these rites took place in subterranean chambers under the Egyptian temples, and among the tests of courage and integrity were hazards by fire, water, and air. The elaborate symbolic plate of initiation, according to the doctrine of the Egyptians which appeared in Lenoir's *La Franche-Maçonnerie*, followed the descriptions in *Sethos* in every detail. There can be no doubt of the origin of the engraving.

In his *Mozart und die königliche Kunst*, Paul Nettl pointed out that Mozart's Illuminist opera, *The Magic Flute*, derived most of its Egyptian atmosphere from *The Life of Sethos*, especially its section dealing with the initiation of Orpheus and Eurydice. The libretto of this work has been ascribed to Johann Emanuel Schikaneder, a Freemason, but there has been some question as to how this clever but not profound man accomplished so extraordinary a production. A careful study of the libretto will convince even the skeptical-minded that many of the lines were taken almost verbatim from *Sethos*.

The Third Book of *The Life of Sethos* devoted considerable space to a discussion of the qualities and attributes of the true initiate. Those who had received initiations occupied a middle ground between the aristocracy and the priesthood, and exercised both temporal and spiritual powers. The initiate was described as a new man in whom the love of virtue and duty had taken the place of all those passions which formerly motivated action. Regardless of rank, due to either birth or fortune, the initiate believed himself destined for the benefit of his own country and for all mankind. These Masters transformed savage peoples

into civilized nations by the establishment of good laws, by instruction in the arts and sciences, and by making themselves examples of heroic virtues. In short, the world owes to the initiates whatever worthy and cultured form it now exhibits. These adepts were men without blemish, yet constantly seeking improvement; men in most things perfect, yet ever striving for a greater perfection.

*Sethos* belonged to a class of esoteric writings and, like the *Comte de Gabalis*, originated in the schools of adepts functioning secretly beneath the surface of European culture. Such works are always difficult to trace, for their authors had no intention of being discovered. If need arose, they were attributed, with or without permission, to some scholar who found it advisable to be noncommittal.

The career of Ignace von Born, a celebrated metallurgist and intellectual, is of interest at this stage of the inquiry. This distinguished mining engineer was an ardent Freemason and the founder of a Masonic Lodge in Vienna. Mozart was a member of this Lodge, as was also the composer, Joseph Haydn. The personal friendship of Mozart and von Born may be implied from the fact that the great composer wrote a short cantata, *Maurerfreude*, dated April 20, 1785, which was performed at a special banquet of the Lodge, *Zur wahren Eintracht*, to celebrate von Born's discovery of a method of working ores by amalgamation.

Mozart was proposed as a candidate for Freemasonry by Baron von Gemmingen, and later the composer persuaded his father to join the Order. Both Johann Emanuel Schikaneder and Charles Louis Giesecke, associated with the libretto of *The Magic Flute*, were Freemasons. Schikaneder took all the credit to himself, but Giesecke, a far more scholarly and reliable person, afterwards privately





anti-Masonic and anti-Illuminist propaganda, he did gather a number of facts. Of Illuminist activity in Austria, he wrote: "By the death of Chevalier de Born the Sect had lost at Vienna one of its chief adepts."

The internal structure of *The Magic Flute* reveals a



TAMINO FLEEING FROM THE SERPENT

Illustrated title page of an early edition of the score of *The Magic Flute*.

strong Illuminist influence. Those music critics are wrong who dismiss *The Magic Flute* as a comic opera. The appraisal of Goethe, who even considered writing a sequel to the opera, is more valuable. The great poet said: "Granted that the majority of spectators care for nothing

but what meets the eye, the initiated will not fail to grasp the higher meaning." Goethe was also a member of the Illuminati.

In his book, Paul Nettl enlarged on the symbolism of the opera. He suggested that *The Magic Flute* was the swan song of Austrian Freemasonry. The Queen of the Night represented Maria Theresa, who was openly opposed to Masonry; Tamino, the hero of the opera, the liberal and friendly Joseph II who favored the Craft; Pamina, the heroine of the fantasy, the upper classes of Austria; the blackamoor, Monostatos, the black-robed Jesuits or monastic Orders; and the clowns, Papageno and Papagena, the peasantry of Austria. The high priest of the Rites of Isis and Osiris was von Born.

The sudden entry of the Queen of the Night and Monostatos into the Temple of Isis and Osiris may have referred to the occasion on which the empress actually forced her way into one of the Masonic Lodges. Monostatos could also have caricatured Leopold Aloys Hoffmann, a Masonic traitor, who, after being befriended and helped by several Lodges, including his own, persuaded the government that the Freemasons were organizing a revolution against the crown. He was partially responsible for the closing of the Masonic Lodges of Austria.

In an article which appeared in 1794, von Batzko interpreted *The Magic Flute* according to the letter of the Illuminist doctrine. The Queen of the Night was superstition; Pamina, enlightenment, the child of the Queen and patriarchal religion (now deceased); Sarastro, reason. The sevenfold circles of the sun were true knowledge or conviction; Monostatos was the human passions; and Prince Tamino, the man of might whose spirituality was not yet perfected by trial and ordeal. The snake was evil; Papa-

genii, folly; the ladies of the Queen of the Night were the servants of superstition; the flute was the single speech of Nature; the chimes given to Papageno were flattery; and the genii, the powers of the mind. Although Bradley gave this summary and considered it more elaborate than consistent with the conditions under which *The Magic Flute* was produced, he appended von Batzko's significant words: "Those who are members of this order will know and understand." Remembering that to the members of the Illuminati and their cryptic geography Egypt always signified Austria, it seems certain that von Born as Sarastro, and further as the symbol of reason, belonged to the psychopolitical thinking of Adam Weishaupt and Baron von Knigge.

Mozart died in 1791, leaving an estate of only sixty florins. He was buried in the black dress of the Masonic Brotherhood, and his last cantata was published by his Masonic Lodge for the benefit of his widow and children. A heavy storm so disrupted the funeral that no record was kept of the location of his grave. He is believed to have been buried in the pauper's field. There is some mystery about this which has never been completely resolved.

### *Cagliostro and the Egyptian Rite of Freemasonry*

A controversy has raged for more than a century and a half over the man who proudly proclaimed himself to be the Count di Cagliostro, Grand Cophte of the Egyptian Rite of Freemasonry. The facts have never been of interest to his detractors, and the popular accounts are of slight value to anyone. The flamboyant count was a hero of the French people at a time when the affection of the populace was certain to bring down upon its object the animosity of the Church and State. If Cagliostro's memory



suffered from the reports circulated by the Inquisition, fared no better when entrusted to the gentle keeping of such literary figures as Thomas Carlyle and Alexandre Dumas *pere*.

A life of Cagliostro was issued under the auspices of the Apostolic Chamber. This august body, happily inspired by rumors circulated by *Le Courrier de l'Europe*, decided that the "benefactor of the people," whose portrait influential ladies carried on their fans, was in truth a Sicilian adventurer, one Giuseppe Balsamo, wanted by the police of Sicily for several crimes, including participation in an assassination plot. A fickle world, with a relish for gossip and reluctant to suspect good where ill was possible, took the Balsamo legend to its breast and has cuddled it there ever since. The present century has found a new excuse for assuming that Cagliostro was an impostor. The reasoning is simple and empiric. The count claimed to possess supernatural or at least superphysical powers and faculties. This in itself justifies his condemnation without further investigation.

Trowbridge,\* one of the few to take the unpopular side of the controversy, was inspired to a dramatic summary of the case: "After having been riddled with abuse till he was unrecognizable, prejudice, the foster child of calumny, proceeded to lynch him, so to speak, for over one hundred years his character was dangled on the gibbet of infamy upon which the *sbirri* of tradition have inscribed a curse upon any one who shall attempt to cut him down. His fate has been his fame. He is remembered in history, not so much for anything he did, as for what was done to him."

As Trowbridge astutely pointed out, nobody who had ever met Balsamo ever knew, recognized, or even saw him as

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\*See *Cagliostro, the Splendour and Misery of a Master of Magic*.

Cagliostro. Balsamo was "wanted" by the police of both London and Paris, but the gendarmery and all the secret agents employed to discover unsavory characters were remarkably slow to suspect that the genial, well-publicized, and, according to his enemies, notorious Alessandro Cagliostro was really the despicable Balsamo. With all his enemies at work night and day to accomplish his undoing, it seems strange that the simplest means of discrediting the count were not pressed more effectively. In any event, no one ever emerged from Cagliostro's past to compromise him.

It would be difficult to reconcile the mental levels of the two men. When last officially examined, Balsamo was a typical rascal, uncultured and uncouth. There was little to suggest that he would acquire distinction as a man of letters or as a proficient in obscure arts and sciences. Even had he resolved thus to enlarge his faculties, this Balsamo would have required a long period of conditioning. He could scarcely have attained a superlative education without someone, somewhere, remembering the circumstances and reporting them to the anxious authorities. Had Cagliostro really been Balsamo and had he remained obscure, he might have escaped recognition, but not after the count's picture had become a household furnishing, and reasonable facsimilies of his face, cast in bronze and plaster or carved in marble, had been everywhere exhibited.

Cagliostro was condemned by the Inquisitional Court as having incurred the censures and penalties pronounced against heretics, dogmatics, heresiarchs, and propagators of magic and superstition. He was found guilty and condemned to the censures and penalties against all persons who, in any manner whatever, favored or formed Societies and conventicles of Freemasonry, as well as by the edicts of the Council of State against all persons convicted of this

crime in Rome or in any other place of the dominions of the Pope.\*

The Inquisitional Office would scarcely have pronounced a sentence that was certain to cause grave criticism in Protestant countries and with the powerful Masonic Orders had less controversial grounds been available. If Cagliostro was Giuseppe Balsamo, why was he not tried for the crimes of this man and openly prosecuted on legitimate charges? To convict a man to perpetual imprisonment for founding a Masonic Lodge within the boundaries of the papal State could scarcely have been a popular procedure on the eve of the French Revolution. Had the count actually been an evil character with a reputation for crime and imposture, these more pertinent and devastating offenses would have ruined his standing before the world, and his esoteric leanings would have had slight bearing upon the administration of justice.

Even de Morande, a spy, blackmailer, unprincipled journalist, and editor of *Le Courier de l'Europe*, admitted that Cagliostro was initiated into Freemasonry in London, April 12, 1777. On this occasion the count identified himself as a colonel of the 3rd Regiment of Brandenburg. Trowbridge said that Cagliostro's Masonic certificate was for some time in a famous collection of autographs belonging to the Marquis of Chateaugiron. The Esperance Lodge, which was Cagliostro's mother Lodge, was affiliated with the Order of Strict Observance. Trowbridge also found evidence that the count was admitted as a Freemason into a Lodge of the Order of Strict Observance at The Hague, and it is intimated that he received Masonic degrees in Germany.

De Morande attempted to belittle Cagliostro's Masonic standing by intimating that the members of the *Lodge*

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\*See *Cagliostro and His Egyptian Rite of Freemasonry*, by Henry Ridgley Evans.



*d'Esperance* were, for the most part, insignificant persons from the humbler trades and crafts of Soho. The count promptly replied that he was proud to be acknowledged a Brother of good and honorable men, and it had not occurred to him to check their financial or social standing. At least, it is established with certainty that the count was a Freemason and had been duly and properly initiated into the Order.\*

The founding of the Egyptian Rite of Freemasonry was shrouded in mystery. Several lines of research have suggested themselves to Masonic historians. One group is convinced that Cagliostro's Rite was derived from a cabalistic Masonry introduced in 1754 by the mystical philosopher, Martines de Pasqually. Perhaps Pasqually was a Portuguese Jew. In any event, his Masonic researches were strongly influenced by the esoteric traditions of that race, and the initiates of his Rite were called Cohens, which is the Hebrew word for priest. In Paris, in 1768, he attracted an influential circle of scholarly persons. Later, he inherited properties in the West Indies, and died in Port-au-Prince. The Inquisition claimed that, while in London, Cagliostro acquired a manuscript by one, George Coston, which he amplified and enriched by his own researches. If so, this Coston was a product of Pasqually's thinking, for this cabalist had many followers and admirers in England.

In fairness to Cagliostro, attention should be given to his own account of his origin and destiny. The story, though generally dismissed as fiction, never has been disproved.

The count claimed to have been instructed in the esoteric arts by Arabian Masters. His parents were Christians of noble family, who had died when their illustrious son was

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\*In compiling this paragraph, we are indebted to the researches of Henry Ridgley Evans, who, in turn, derived his material from *Cagliostro in Eastern Europe*, etc., by B. Ivanoff, which appeared in the *Transactions of the Quatuor Coronati Lodge*.

but three months of age, leaving him under the protection of the Great Mufti. Cagliostro was never told the name of his father, but was attended by a most learned tutor named Althotas, who was a Master of secret and mysterious arts. Althotas took the boy to Mecca in his twelfth year and presented him to the Grand Sherif. At that time, Cagliostro had no name other than Acharat, by which he was known in Medina. He remained three years in Mecca, then went to Egypt where he explored the pyramids. After three more years in Africa and Asia, he arrived at the island of Rhodes where he was entertained by Emmanuele Pinto, Grand Master of the Knights of Malta. Pinto, a man of despotic methods, became Grand Master in 1741 and gained distinction for resisting papal encroachments on his authority. Cagliostro assisted him in alchemical and medical researches.

Althotas died at Malta, and it was on this island that Acharat first assumed European dress and took the name of Count di Cagliostro. According to Eliphas Levi, the name Althotas encloses the word *thot* (Thoth), the Egyptian god of wisdom, and the prefix *al*, implying God or divine, suggests that the true teacher of the bizarre count was the divine mind. Althotas could also be the name given to an initiate of the Mysteries at the time of his elevation. It has been suggested that Althotas was really the elusive Dr. Kolmer, who gave instructions in magic to Adam Weishaupt, the founder of the Bavarian Illuminati. Alexander Wilder has noted that the word *cagliostro* is made up of Kalos, meaning *beautiful*, and Aster, a *star* or *sun*.

The tie between Cagliostro and the Illuminati was as interesting as his possible association with the Knights Templars. The Inquisitional reports showed that Cagliostro confessed during his trial that he had been initiated into

the Illuminati in an underground cave near Frankfort-on-the-Main. Some writers have hazarded the speculation that the Illuminati or the Templars supplied Cagliostro with at least part of the funds with which he was usually so well-provided. The Illuminist rituals, as expanded by Weishaupt and von Knigge, certainly had strong Egyptian coloring, but there is evidence that Cagliostro was well-advanced in his own project before his direct contact with the Bavarian group.

Some historians suggest that Egyptian Masonry was introduced into Europe about 1771 by a merchant of Jutland who had been in Egypt, and had also visited Malta where he could have contacted Cagliostro. The doctrines of the Jutland merchant were based upon the teachings of Manes. In the course of introducing his own Rite, the count also revealed a remarkable knowledge of the obscure doctrines of Emanuel Swedenborg. Cagliostro claimed, while using the name Count Sutkowski, that he was the messenger of a Swedenborgian Secret Society existing in Avignon.

While Cagliostro proved before a group of French intellectuals, including the distinguished Court de Gebelin, that he was an accomplished Egyptologist, the Egyptian Rite does not include any profound exposition of the religion or philosophy of ancient Egypt. It is surprising, indeed, that so little is known about Cagliostro's esoteric teachings. His lectures to the more advanced members of his Rite were probably not included in the surviving manuscripts. The Egyptian Rite of Freemasonry is the only ritual of the period, however, which actually included transcendental experiments and formulas.

In our collection is a contemporary manuscript of the Mother Lodge of Adoption of High Egyptian Masonry founded by the Grand Cophte. It is addressed to the very



dear Brother Robelin, member of the Royal Lodge of St. John of Scotland, from the friend of Nature and humanity. The rituals of Egyptian Masonry and its Lodge of Adoption (female Masonry) were almost identical. The arrangements of the Lodge rooms, the symbols, ceremonies, officers, and the lectures given new initiates were but slightly altered for the female degrees. The unique feature of Cagliostro's system contained in the closing pages of the manuscript, while referred to by several writers, has not been examined in detail.

According to this manuscript, the eternal God knows that man cannot accomplish his proper dominion over himself



—From *Le Maître Inconnu* Cagliostro

#### CAGLIOSTRO'S SYMBOLIC SEAL

and Nature without the knowledge of moral and physical perfection, without penetrating into the true sanctuary of Nature, and without possessing the secret doctrine of the Order. This doctrine bestows physical immortality and the perfection of the moral nature. By the extension of the corporeal existence, the initiate attains wisdom, intelligence, the faculty of understanding and of speaking all languages, and the precious happiness of becoming an intermediary between God and mankind.

Having so wonderfully attained, the initiate is now as one with heaven and earth. He can control the invisible spirits of the universe, and can fulfill the works of the

Mysteries as revealed through the teaching of the Grand Cophte. Then follows the description of an alchemical regeneration of the human body made possible in forty days through the use of a small quantity of a secret medicine, or substance, supplied by the Grand Cophte. The use of this medicine in conjunction with a carefully specified routine of eating and sleeping results in a complete purification and renewal of the body, even to the hair, teeth, and fingernails. On the fortieth day, the renewed person is ready to go forth into the world to teach the truth, to overcome evil, and to bear witness to the glory of the eternal God. This mysterious renewal of life can be repeated every five years, so that the initiate can remain in the mortal world until it pleases God to call this sanctified person to his eternal reward.

The actual rituals of the Egyptian Rite were not by any means so fantastic as the accounts published by Guillaune Figuier and the Marquis de Luchet. It is possible that some of the glamour of the French court penetrated into the sanctuaries of the Egyptian Rite, but, if so, such spectacles were limited to a few Lodges composed mostly of courtiers and their ladies.

Actually the Egyptian Rite, with certain exceptions—mostly symbolical or philosophical—was no more bizarre than the so-called regular Lodges. The actual record of Cagliostro's activities, if judged impartially, revealed that, in spite of the absurd reports circulated concerning him, the Count was a humanitarian of parts, a champion of the exploited masses, a practical idealist, and a teacher of a highly ethical, constructive, and moral philosophy. The rest is heresay.

*The Cloud Upon the Sanctuary*

The Aulic Councilor, Karl von Eckartshausen (1752-1813), belonged in the group of 18th-century mystics which included Johann Kaspar Lavater, Baron Kirchberger, and Louis Claude de Saint-Martin. He wrote extensively on mystical, magical, numerological, and alchemical subjects, and even contributed works on drama, politics, and art criticism. These brought him considerable distinction, but their popularity has not endured. Only *The Cloud Upon the Sanctuary*, translated by Isabelle de Steiger, is available in English.

The Aulic Councilor was the natural son of Count Karl of Haimbhausen. His mother, who died in giving birth to the boy, was the daughter of a superintendent of the count's estates. Although his father was most solicitous and affectionate and did everything in his power to advance the lad's fortunes, von Eckartshausen was extremely sensitive about his illegitimacy, and this unfortunate circumstance burdened his entire life with a deep but gentle despondency. He received an excellent education in philosophy and law, was made Aulic Councilor to the Elector, Karl Theodore, was attached in honorable position to the library of Munich, and later was nominated keeper of the archives of the Electoral House. Although he had political enemies, his honors were preserved because his outstanding virtues and abilities endeared him to the Elector.

The mystical writings of von Eckartshausen were, to a large degree, influenced by Roman Catholicism, but the gentle and beautiful spirit of the works has endeared them to thoughtful persons of many religious convictions. Certainly, the literary productions of the Councilor included many matters not within the boundaries of orthodoxy, as, for example, his meditations upon the cabala, the Pythago-



rean theory of numbers, transcendental magic, and astrology. But it has not been recorded that his interests caused him any difficulties with the Church.

Few details are available about von Eckartshausen's association with the Esoteric Societies of his time. The Catalogue of the library of Dorbon-aire, under No. 1030, describes a manuscript written at the beginning of the 19th century and stated to be by von Eckartshausen. One page of this manuscript contains three pen-drawn and hand-colored vignettes. The first is the moon in two of its quarters; the second is the pentacle of Solomon; and the third is the emblem of the Rosy Cross. The last would suggest a possible familiarity with the activities of this Society.

*The Cloud Upon the Sanctuary* consists of a series of six letters addressed generally to "my dear brothers in the Lord." The second letter contains the most remarkable account of the Secret School of the adepts to be found in mystical literature. Naturally, Mr. Waite objects to the obvious meaning and attempts to confuse the issue by implying that Eckartshausen "is only a peg on which to hang the high considerations of eternity"—whatever that may mean. While space does not permit, or the need require, a complete reprint of von Eckartshausen's second letter, there are several paragraphs which advance the present labor.

"It is necessary, my dear brothers in the Lord, to give you a clear idea of the interior Church; of that illuminated Community of God which is scattered throughout the world, but is governed by one truth and united in one spirit. This community of light has existed since the first day of the world's creation, and its duration will be to the end of time. . . .

"This community possesses a School, in which all who thirst for knowledge are instructed by the Spirit of Wisdom itself; and all the mysteries of God and of nature are preserved therein for the children of light. . . . It is the most hidden of communities, yet it possesses members gathered from many orders; of such is this School. From all time there has been an exterior school based on the interior one, of which it is but the outer expression. From all time, therefore, there has been a hidden assembly, a society of the Elect, of those who sought for and had capacity for light, and this interior society was called the interior Sanctuary or Church. . . .

"The interior Church was formed immediately after the fall of man, and received from God at first-hand the revelation of those means by which fallen humanity could be again raised to its rights and delivered from its miseries. It received the primitive charge of all revelation and mystery; it received the key of true science, both divine and natural. . . .

"This Sanctuary remained changeless, though external religion received in the course of time and circumstances varied modifications, and became divorced from the interior truths which can alone preserve the letter. . . .

"This illuminated community has been through time the true school of God's spirit, and considered as school, it has its Chair, its Doctor, it possesses a rule for students, it has forms and objects for study, and, in short, a method by which they study. It has, also, its degrees for successive development of higher altitudes. . . .

"This school of wisdom has been forever most secretly hidden from the world, because it is invisible and submissive solely to Divine Government. . . .

"Worldly intelligence seeks this Sanctuary in vain; in vain also do the efforts of malice strive to penetrate these

great mysteries; all is undecipherable to him who is not prepared; he can see nothing, read nothing in the interior. . .

"But there are methods by which ripeness is attained, for in this holy communion is the primitive storehouse of the most ancient and original science of the human race, with the primitive mysteries also of all science. It is the unique and really illuminated community which is in possession of the key to all mystery, which knows the center and source of nature and creation. It is a society which unites superior power to its own, and includes members from more than one world. It is the society whose members form a theocratic republic, which one day will be the Regent Mother of the whole World."

It is useless for Mr. Waite to suggest that von Eckartshausen's letter is to be understood only as referring symbolically to a personal exaltation of consciousness. The Aulic Councilor was fully aware of the adept tradition and, writing in 1790, refers to "these sages, whose number is small." He later mentions that "they live in various parts of the earth. . . . Some live in Europe, others in Africa, but they are bound together by the harmony of their souls, and they are therefore as one. They are joined together, although they may be thousands of miles apart from each other. They understand each other, although they speak in different tongues, because the language of the sages is spiritual perception."\*

Precisely the same implication appears in the writings of Paracelsus, who says: "There are persons who have been exalted to God, and who have remained in that state of exaltation, and they have not died. Their physical bodies have lost their lives, but without being conscious of it, without sensation, without any disease, and without suffering,

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\*See *Disclosures of Magic*, quoted in the appendix of *Paracelsus*, by Franz Hartmann.



and their bodies became transformed, and disappeared in such a manner that nobody knew what became of them, and yet they remained on the earth.”\*

It is evident from the writings of von Eckartshausen and those other mystics with whom he was directly or indirectly associated that the adept tradition descended into that assembly of esotericists responsible for certain important innovations which affected the descent of the Orders of Freemasonry. Baron Kirchberger sought to secure from von Eckartshausen the personal communication of the Lost Word, as the baron himself testified. This in itself reveals the facts with sufficient clarity. There is proof enough that the tradition survived the political complications resulting from the program of Universal Reformation, and reappeared in the Orders of Fraternity.

### *The French Transcendentalists*

The descent of the esoteric tradition in France presents few historical landmarks prior to the rise of Freemasonic speculation in the second half of the 18th century. Before this time, there were occasional outstanding names, usually connected with alchemy or with speculations derived from the doctrines of the Knights Templars. Initiates from other countries visited France and left various mementos of their activities, but such secret Orders as endured in the country found it expedient to remain obscure.

The most famous and dramatic of the French transcendentalists was Abbe Alphonse Louis Constant, who wrote under the Hebraistic pseudonym, Eliphas Levi Zahad. He was born in Paris in 1809 or 1810, the son of a poor and unschooled shoemaker. He showed early promise of mental

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\*See *Philosophia*.

brilliance, and received a free education at the Seminary of St. Sulpice through the efforts of the curé of the parish. Alphonse was an excellent student; took minor orders, and finally became a deacon. Then suddenly, for reasons not entirely clear but probably doctrinal, he was expelled from St. Sulpice and came under the disfavor of the Church.

The departure of Alphonse from the Seminary aroused considerable speculation among his biographers. Some suspected that he showed an early addiction to what the clergy might reasonably regard as diabolical arts. Others suggested that the young deacon had committed his mind to the doctrines of Rousseau, Voltaire, and other intellectual liberals. This seems the more likely as one of his early writings, *The Gospel of Liberty*, was sufficiently socialistic to result in six months' imprisonment.

Endeavors to trace the source of Eliphas Levi's esoteric knowledge have been seriously hampered because of insufficient biographical material. After an unhappy marriage which terminated in 1847, Levi devoted himself completely to the esoteric arts and sciences, and published several works on these subjects. These writings reveal an extensive knowledge of the history and philosophy of magic and the lives of the principal exponents of mystical subjects from the earliest times. His use of reference material, however, did not always indicate a solid familiarity with the authorities to which he referred or from whose writings he quoted.

Levi had a basic concept of transcendentalism which he unfolded according to his own convictions. He used the works of other authors only to advance his own peculiar purposes. He must have had access to many rare and curious books, and he wrote with a strong, mystical quality of certainty. His style was dogmatic, dramatic, and fascinating. He was an artist of great skill and vivid imagina-

tion. The diagrams and figures with which he embellished his manuscripts were inspired by the works of earlier esotericists, but he developed them with genius and artistry.

The Magus, as he was called, depended largely on a circle of private students for the perpetuation of his message. Many of those who associated themselves with him were of high position and superior attainments. He left volumes of manuscripts and reams of letters, which were collected with loving care by his disciples. A number of Levi's unpublished works were copied by his students. Among the most industrious of these copyists should be mentioned Nowakowihi and the Baron Spedalieri.

Eliphas Levi departed from this life in 1875. Although he had long been at variance with the Church on points of doctrine, he received the last sacraments and died in the bosom of the faith. Waite reproduced a photograph of Levi lying in state with a large crucifix on his breast.

One of the faithful disciples of Eliphas Levi describes the Magus in these words: "He was of a short and corpulent figure; his face was kind and benevolent, beaming with good nature, and he wore a long, gray beard which covered nearly the whole of his breast. His apartment resembled a *bric-a-brac* shop, with specimens of the most beautiful and rare old china, tapestry, and valuable paintings. In one of the rooms there was an alcove in which stood a bed covered with a gorgeous quilt of red velvet bordered with massive gold fringe, and a red velvet step stood before this magnificent couch, having a soft cushion also of red and gold laid on the top of it. . . . He lived a quiet and retired life, having few friends. . . . He had a wonderful memory, and a marvelous flow of language, his expressions and illustrations being of the choicest and rarest character."



After the impetus given by Eliphas Levi, those who had imbibed deeply of his doctrine attempted a restoration of ancient mystical Orders and esoteric arts in France. About 1889, the Marquis Stanislas de Guaita created a cabalistic Rosicrucian Fraternity. Later, Dr. Gerard Encausse, better known as Papus, became the head of this group which included such distinguished names as Sar Peladen and Paul Christian. These men, in their search for inspiration drew generously from the traditions of Martinism and the manuscripts left by Levi. There is agreement among the informed that at some time in the eventful life of the Magus he had contacted the Secret Schools. When the disciple is found, the Master is not far away.

Kenneth Mackenzie, IX<sup>o</sup>, a member of the English Rosicrucian research group, knew Eliphas Levi quite intimately. He described him as a man of genius and learning, and "a member of the Brotherhood of Light, or *Fratres Lucis*." Although such a membership would violate the supposed historical boundaries of the *Fratres Lucis*, there is nothing to prove that this Order did not survive among a small group of initiated esotericists.\*

Mrs. Isabel Cooper-Oakley, who did so much research into the activities of the mysterious Comte de St.-Germain, was able to examine manuscript records of the *Fratres Lucis*, or the Wise, Mighty and Reverend Order of the Knights or Brothers of Light, which were for a time in the files of the Imperial Library of Petrograd.

Although the Order claimed that it was founded in the year 40 A. D. under the patronage of St. John the Evangelist, no records of its independent existence were known prior to 1781. In the Wilkoroki manuscripts examined by Mrs. Cooper-Oakley, there were references to the Seven

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\*See *The Royal Masonic Cyclopaedia*, etc., article "Levi."

Wise Fathers, Heads of the Seven Churches of Asia. Were not these Seven Wise Fathers of the East the adepts of the Secret Schools? As Mr. Waite points out: "The Order comes therefore before us as that of a Hidden Church or Holy Assembly, *ex hypothesi* like that of Eckartshausen, but passing into substituted manifestation by virtue of its ceremonial workings."\*

No consideration of the forces molding the early life of Levi would be complete without mention of an incident which occurred on a certain morning in 1839.† An eccentric character name Alphonse Esquiros arrived at Levi's sanctum with an invitation to call upon the Mapah, a mysterious, bearded man of majestic demeanor and beautiful, mystic face, who held spiritual court in a squalid Paris garret. The Mapah, whose real name was Ganneau, wore the tattered cloak of a woman over his clothes, and conveyed the impression of a destitute dervish. This strange prophet believed himself to be the reincarnation of Louis XVII, who had returned to save the world. The Mapah was surrounded by several other entranced persons as weird and ecstatic as himself. Levi preserved several extracts from the words of the Mapah on that occasion. "From the first hour of the Fall, the task of humanity has been . . . a great and terrible task of initiation. For this also the terms of that initiation are all equally sacred in the eyes of God. There *Alpha* is our common mother Eve, while the *Omega* is Liberty, who is our common mother also."

According to the account left by Levi, it was a disciple of the Mapah whose fanatical conduct directly precipitated the French Revolution of 1848. There may be more to the story of the Mapah than appeared on the surface. Levi certainly did not invent his transcendental doctrines,

\*See *The Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross*.

†See *History of Magic*.

although he dressed them in a literary form entirely his own. He referred obscurely to his entry upon a "fateful path," and discussed the mysteries of initiation as one party to the facts.

Levi derived great comfort and inspiration from the life and writings of the German mystical alchemist, Heinrich Khunrath. It is known to members of Esoteric Orders that Khunrath had received initiation, but had not attained the highest grade. His *Amphitheatrum Sapientiae Aeternae*, or *Amphitheater of Eternal Wisdom*, published in Hanover in 1609, is illustrated with a series of magnificent symbolic plates. Levi interpreted these figures and the text that accompanied them according to his own cabalistical convictions, and seems to have arrived at profound, if unorthodox, opinions regarding their true meanings. The philosophy of this French Magus was founded on the concept of a secret, esoteric teaching which descended from the most ancient times, flourished in Egypt, passed then to Greece, and finally was absorbed into the structure of the mystic Christian Church. There is sufficient internal evidence in Levi's writings to justify his inclusion among the disciples of the Esoteric Schools.

The French esoteric groups which stemmed from the teachings of Levi have left a valuable heritage of occult lore. Unfortunately, however, they were born out of time, for their magical speculations belonged to an earlier cycle of alchemy, transcendentalism, and the cabala. Levi's interpretations of Masonic rituals and symbols influenced American Freemasonry through the writings of Albert Pike, who quoted and paraphrased many of the works of the French Magus, but was wise enough to refrain from identifying the highly controversial source of his information.

The urgencies of modern living have altered the public taste, and the lore of antiquity is now only of interest to a



limited number of research students. The trend is away from the marvelous and the miraculous, and toward the useful and the necessary. The Great School and its initiates have discarded the cloak of Hermetic fables, and have selected their new symbolism from the collective emergencies of contemporary living. The universal truths of the secret doctrine are stated in terms of politics, industry, economics, management, and labor. International accord, the arbitration of religious and social differences, and the systematic advancement of the plan for world welfare supply the ingredients of a new application of Hermetic chemistry.

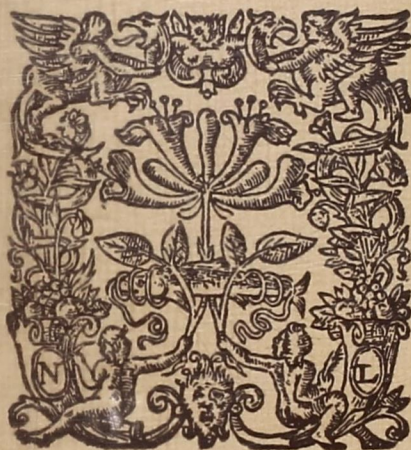
Thus the plan unfolds, the principles remain the same, the needs enlarge, and the mortal crisis is perpetual. Three thousand years ago Memphis of the White Walls was the college-city of the Egyptian adepts. Here the initiates governed their school according to divine and universal laws. Memphis was the archetype of the World City, the union of nations, the one world—the Philosophic Commonwealth which is to come. The goal of the Secret Schools is the revelation in the sphere of mortal activity of the design of the Invisible College. The very earth itself is to be the campus; nations and States, the classrooms; humanity, the student body; those dedicated to essential progress, the teachers; and the eternal sciences and arts revealed by God through Nature, the curriculum. Until all men of "towardness" recognize both their responsibilities and their opportunities, the work of the Secret Schools is not finished. The day will come when that which has been taught under oath and obligation shall belong equally and freely to all men, not because it has been brought down to them, but because they themselves have been raised up by vision and experience and have claimed their eternal heritage.

AMERICA'S ASSIGNMENT WITH DESTINY

# **The Adepts**

**In The Western Esoteric Tradition**

**By MANLY PALMER HALL**



**Part Five**

**America's Assignment With  
Destiny**



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By MANLY PALMER HALL

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This work is a section of a comprehensive survey of the adept tradition, which will be complete in fifteen parts. It is issued in the present form because of the unprecedented rise in the cost of book-production. Only in this way can the material be made available to students at a reasonable price.

# AMERICA'S ASSIGNMENT WITH DESTINY

## FOREWORD

Those desiring substantial evidence of the unfoldment of the Great Plan should follow the suggestion inscribed upon the monument to Christopher Wren in Saint Paul's Cathedral, and gaze about them. The rapid advancement in the social and political states of man, the increasing richness of human living, and the broadening vision toward individual and collective responsibility herald, with auroral colors, the rising sun of truth. There is much yet to be accomplished, but already the achievement is impressive. Even the most devout humanist cannot survey the orderly progress of the race and at the same time deny the existence of a well-integrated program.

The light of the ancient Vedas is slowly but surely illuminating the whole world. The vision of man's noble destiny and the sacred sciences which made possible the realization of that vision have been guarded and served by "the Silent Ones of the earth." The priesthoods of the sacerdotal colleges, the hierophants of the Mystery Schools, and the adept-masters of the Secret Societies have been the guardians of man's noblest purpose—the perfection of his own kind. It is the inalienable right of every honorable person to be grateful for the opportunities which progress bestows. With this appreciation comes also an appropriate measure of resolution. The past proves the future, which is but the extension of good works toward their fullness.

The Mystery Schools neither restrained nor limited the unfoldment of human institutions. Man fashioned his civilization according to his natural instincts and convic-



tions. This process must continue, for growth is not hastened by the interference of authority. Man substantiates with his mind and heart that which he fashions with his hands. The esoteric tradition ensouls "the ordinary works," revealing the larger purposes through the smaller ones. Not so long ago, ninety per cent of the population of the earth was in physical slavery. Having liberated his body, the audacious creature must now free his heart and mind. Thus, pressed on by a sovereign necessity, the world conqueror becomes the self-conqueror.

Under a democratic concept of living, the responsibilities for progress pass to the keeping of the people. The powers vested in the governing body functioning with the consent of the governed include not only provisions for collective security, but also the advancement of such religions, philosophies, arts and sciences as contribute to the essential growth of human character. An administrative system which ignores ethics, culture, and morality cannot survive as a dominant political organism. Democratic institutions must accept the task for which they were fashioned and become the conscious custodians of the democratic destiny.

Progress demands the most from those with the largest spheres of influence. Vast organizations, industrial, political, social, and educational, have been made possible by the modern life-way. These have become the molders of public opinion, feared or respected according to the measure of integrity revealed in their management. The future of human society is intimately associated with the destinies of these vast enterprises which have inherited, along with physical success, the duty or, more correctly, the privilege of world guardianship. Even the continuance of the economic theory now demands the strengthening of ethical convictions. Prominence of any kind, whether bestowed by wealth or authority, carries with it priestly obligations.

The leader, whatever be his field, is looked upon for intelligent guidance. His convictions inspire his followers, his words influence their lives, and his policies dominate their activities.

There is every indication that the esoteric tradition will next function through that complex of vast interrelated organisms of production and distribution which now dominates human imagination. While this structure may appear to the superficial-minded as heartless and soulless, it is also the largest and most powerful potential instrument for the advancement of mankind ever yet devised. Education, science, and economics are today indivisible. They have already formed a partnership for their mutual advancement. Equipped with knowledge, skill, and the necessary physical resources, this huge combine awaits the destiny for which it was intended.

There is no virtue in burdening the future with the conclusions of today. To prophecy is to restrict, not the will of heaven, but the mind of man. Old principles, as they reveal more of themselves, will be given new names; and progress is always an adjustment of concepts, each of which is in a constant state of change. Assuming, however, that the term democracy, with its numerous imponderable overtones, conveys a conviction of natural unfoldment, it is reasonable to infer that the democratic motion will continue until all of its potentials have become potencies.

Progress is not bound inevitably to any nation or people. Social and political structures are instruments for the advancement of the Great Work only to the degree that they keep the faith. If ambition or selfishness breaks the bond, the privilege of guardianship is forfeited. This does not mean that the project fails; rather, that which fails the project loses the privilege of leadership. The Plan then passes to the keeping of other groups and other ages. Man

cannot destroy or pervert the works of destiny. He can only divide himself from those works, and by so doing cease to share in the essential vitality of progress. Thus it is that unreasonable doubts and fears concerning providence are philosophically unsound. Failure is always regrettable, but principles do not fail, and that which is foreordained perfects itself.

Although empires may collapse, great teachers be martyred, schools and systems perish, and enlightened leaders remain unhonored, the substance of the Great Work remains unchanged and unchangeable. New vehicles appear, even as the older ones are betrayed by human selfishness. The Eternal Commonwealth is an assignment of destiny, and spiritual progress, symbolized by the fabled phoenix, rises victoriously from the ashes of the human ruin. The adept tradition has always available social instruments waiting to be ensouled with the larger vision. All things created by men are mortal and destructible, but the way destined by heaven is immortal and indestructible. Universal enlightenment and universal fraternity are the natural ends which reward the social struggle. The world and all that inhabits it are moving triumphantly toward peace and security. At any given time the vision may be obscured, but in the larger dimensions of time, all things work together for the fulfillment of the greater good.

Manly Palmer Hall

Los Angeles, California; April 1951.



# THE ADEPTS

## AMERICA'S ASSIGNMENT WITH DESTINY

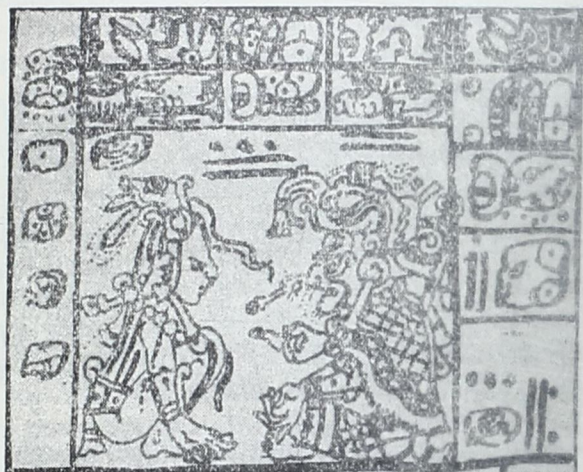
### *Quetzalcoatl*

Three great culture heroes were associated with the origin of Mayan civilization: Votan, who founded the Votanic Empire seated at Palanque; Itzama (Zamna), the Yucatecan hero; and Kulkulkan, whose worship extended throughout the Central American area. All three came from a remote region lying eastward, introduced arts and sciences, and founded religious cults or Mysteries. From the legendary histories of these persons, they should be included as adepts or initiates of ancient Secret Schools, possibly Atlantean.

In a book written in the Quichean language and attributed to Votan, the great one declared himself "a snake," a descendent of Imos of the line of Chan. He came to America, by the command of God, from a distant place. He ultimately founded Palanque, and built a temple with many subterranean chambers, which was called the House of Darkness. Here he deposited the records of his nation in the keeping of certain aged men called guardians. There is a legend that this Votan was the grandson of Noah. The original book containing this report was in the possession of Nunex de la Vega, Bishop of Chiapas, but he destroyed

it with the other native manuscripts which he was able to accumulate. Fortunately, however, it had been copied by Aguilar.\*

Itzamna, according to Cogullodo, was a priest who came with the migrations from the east. He was the son of the supreme deity, Hunab-Ku (the holy one). Itzamna is pictured as an ancient man with a very prominent and



—From the *Codex Dresden*

#### ITZAMNA, THE FATHER OF THE ITZAS

The old god, with elaborate headdress and cape, is seated at right and appears to be addressing a lesser divinity who faces him at left.

strangely shaped nose, either toothless or with one crooked fang. Likenesses of him have been found indicating his birth from a plant growing from the earth. He is also shown rising from the mouth of a serpent or a turtle, to symbolize that he came from the sea. He healed the sick and restored the dead to life. He lived to a great age, and

\*See *God of Mexico*, by Lewis Spence.

was said to have been buried at Izamal (Itzamal), where his tombs became places of pilgrimages. Itzamna was sometimes called "the Skillful Hand." After his death, his body was divided. His skillful hand was placed in one temple, his heart in another, and the rest of his remains in a third. One of the best known of his emblems was a Tau or T cross.\*

It is now generally admitted that the Quetzalcoatl of the Nahuatlán people, the Gucumatz of the Quiches, and the Kulkulkan of the more southern Mayas were one person. In each language, the word signifies *feathered*, *plumed*, or *winged serpent*. This title may have resulted from Quetzalcoatl casting his lot among, or gathering his first followers from, the descendants of Votan. This tribal group had the serpent as its heraldic device. At a remote time this semimystical, semidivine priest-initiate Quetzalcoatl came from the fabled land of the "seven colors" and established his rite at Tulla and Cholula.

Quetzalcoatl was the initiate-philosopher and teacher of the Nahuatlán tribes of Central Mexico. Among the appellations of this priest-prophet-king are "he who was born of the virgin," "Lord of the Winds," and "the Divine Incarnation." Quetzalcoatl was the son of the universal creator-god and the virgin Sochiquetzal, and his conception was made known by an ambassador from the god of the Milky Way.

Torquemada, in his *Indian Monarchies*, described a band of people who came from the north dressed in long black robes. Arriving at Tulla, these strangers were well received; but finding the region already thickly populated, they continued to Cholula. These wanderers were great artists, and skilled in working metals. Quetzalcoatl was

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\*See *Kulkulkan, the Bearded Conqueror*, by T. A. Williard, for further details and pictures.



their leader. Mendieta, in his *Ecclesiastical History*, described Quetzalcoatl as a white man with a strong formation of body, broad forehead, large eyes, and a flowing beard. He wore a mitre on his head, and was dressed in a long white robe reaching to his feet, and covered with a design of red crosses. In his hand he held a sickle. His habits were ascetic; he never married, and was most chaste and pure in his life, and is said to have endured penance in a neighboring mountain, not for its effect upon himself, but as an example to others. . . . He condemned sacrifices, except of fruit or flowers, and was known as the god of peace; for when addressed on the subject of war, he is reported to have stopped his ears with his fingers.\*

Fray Bernardino de Sahagun described Quetzalcoatl as very homely, with a long head and a very long beard. There was a recumbent statue of him in the temple at Tulla which was always covered with blankets. "His vassals," writes the good Fray, "were all workmen in the mechanic arts and skillful in cutting the green stones called Chalchivites, also in the art of smelting silver and making other objects. All these arts had their origin and commencement with Quetzalcoatl, who had houses made with these precious green stones called Chalchivites and others made of silver, still others made of red and white shells, others all made of boards, and again others of turquoises, and some all made of rich plumes. . . .

"Quetzalcoatl also owned all the wealth of the world in gold, silver, and the green stones called Chalchivites, and other precious things; and had a great abundance of cocoa-trees of different colors, which are called xochicacatlao. The said vassals of Quetzalcoatl were also very wealthy, and did not lack anything at all; they never suffered famine or lack of corn; they never ate even the small ears of corn,

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\*See *The North Americans of Antiquity*, by John T. Short (New York, 1880).

but rather heated their baths with them, using them instead of fire-wood. They also say that the said Quetzalcoatl did penance by pricking his limbs and drawing blood, with which he stained the maguey points; that he bathed at midnight in a spring called xicapaya."\*

The interpreter of the *Codex Telleriano-Remensis* said that Quetzalcoatl was created by the breath of Tonacatecotli. Quetzalcoatl was born on the day of Seven Canes, and disappeared or died on the day of One Cane. He was identified with the planet Venus. The *Codex Vaticanus A.* says that the hero founded four temples: the first for the princes; the second for the people; the third, the House of Fear or Serpents; and the fourth, the Temple of Shame. The *Codex Chimalpopca* says that Quetzalcoatl was born as a nine-year-old child. When he resolved to leave Mexico, he reached the seashore, and, removing his clothing and his snake mask of turquoise, destroyed himself by fire. His ashes changed into birds, and his heart became the morning star. He remained four days in the underworld and four days as a corpse. After that he ascended to heaven as a god.

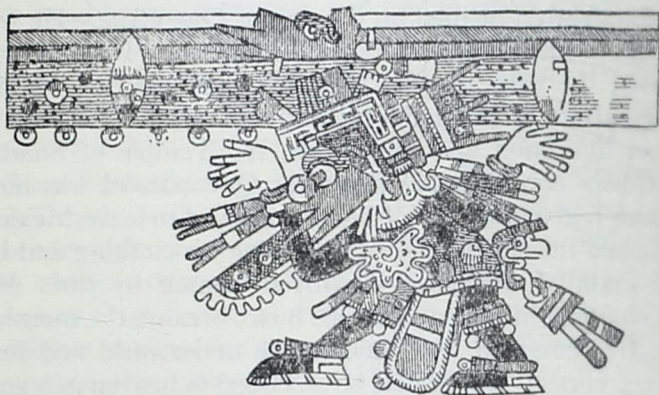
It is specifically mentioned by Sahagun that Quetzalcoatl created and built houses under the earth. Traces of subterranean grottoes and rooms have been discovered in the vicinity of most of the architectural monuments of the Nahuas. There is a vast complex of such apartments near the Pyramid of the Sun at San Juan Teotihuacan. The Amerindians believed the serpent to be an earth dweller, and it is quite possible that the accounts implied these subterranean and secret places to be chambers of initiation into the mysteries of the cult. According to de Bourbourg, the Mexican demigod Votan made a journey through a subterranean passage which, running under ground, terminated

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\*See *A History of Ancient Mexico*.

at the root of heaven. This passage was "a snake's hole," and Votan was admitted because he was himself "a son of the snake."

Quetzalcoatl appeared as the great sorcerer, magician, or necromancer. He performed miracles, and upon his departure his secrets were entrusted to an Order of priests governed by a hierophant or Master. This priesthood practiced the arts and sciences, treated the sick, adminis-



—From Seler's *Codex Vaticanus* Nr. 3773

QUETZALCOATL AS GOD OF THE WIND AND PRESIDING DEITY  
OVER THE REGION OF THE EAST

tered sacraments, and were diviners and prophets. Landa gives some consideration to the activities of these religious Orders.

Lucien Biart summarizes the available data:

"The most contradictory ideas have been current in regard to this divinity, who, now considered of celestial origin, and now regarded as a man who had acquired the immortality of the gods, seems in reality to be a union of several personages. . . . He certainly belonged to a race other than the one he civilized; but what was his country?



He died, announcing that he would return at the head of white-faced men; and we have seen that the Indians believed his prophecy fulfilled when the Spaniards landed on their shores. According to Sahagun, the most usual ornaments of the images of Quetzalcoatl were a mitre spotted like the skin of a tiger, a short embroidered tunic, turquoise ear-rings, and a golden collar supporting fine shells. The legs of these images were encased in gaiters of tiger-skins, and on their feet were black sandals. A shield hung from the left arm, and in the right hand was a scepter ornamented with precious stones, an emblem which terminated in a crook like a bishop's crosier.\*\*

Quetzalcoatl is credited with the invention of the pictorial or hieroglyphical method of writing, and especially is his name associated with the *Tonalamatl*, or *Book of Fate*. This was more than a civil calendar and was reserved for the calculation of human destiny and prophecies concerning the future of the State. It was used by "master magicians," the chief of whom was an astrological adept credited with extraordinary occult powers. While it is likely that Quetzalcoatl brought the *Tonalamatl* back to Mexico after his journey among the Mayas, a people already advanced in such matters, the Aztec legend has been summarized by Mendieta. The gods had created a man, Oxomoco, and a woman, Cipactonatl, as the progenitors of the human race. They dwelt in a cave at Cuernavaca, and in order to regulate their lives these two resolved to devise a calendar. Cipactonatl felt that her descendant, Quetzalcoatl, should be invited to participate in the project. Because she was the mother of all the living and a great prophetess, Cipactonatl was privileged to select and write the first sign or day-symbol of the calendar. The others followed until the thirteen signs were completed.

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\* See *The Aztecs, Their History, Manners, and Customs* (Chicago, 1929.)

Sahagun, in his *General History*, gave a number of details of the struggle between Quetzalcoatl, the civilizer, and Tezcatlipoca, who apparently signified the primitive and sanguine religious cult of Mexico. The old priesthood, which practiced human sacrifice and adhered to a policy of war and destruction, resented the peaceful and gentle faith brought by Quetzalcoatl. In the end, Tezcatlipoca,



—From the *Codex Ramirez*

QUETZALCOATL AS THE PRINCIPAL DEITY  
OF THE PEOPLE OF CHOLULA

the personification of the sorcerers, contrived to poison the god-king, which implies that his doctrines were corrupted by false teachings and interpretations.

The poison worked slowly and insidiously, until Quetzalcoatl, realizing that he could not combat successfully the old perverted priesthood, left Tulla, ordering his palaces

of gold and silver, turquoise and precious stones to be set afire. Accompanied by a procession of musicians, youths, and maidens bearing flowers, and flocks of singing birds, the old adept journeyed to Cholula, where the great pyramid was built in his honor.

It was written that the Cholulans deeply admired the great priest because of the purity of his life, the kindliness of his manner, and his doctrines of peace and brotherhood. He remained with them for nearly twenty years, slowly sickening from the poison which was destroying his body. At last he realized that his ministry was coming to an end, so he continued his long journey toward the mysterious city of Tlapallan from which he had come. He turned toward the east and proceeded to the sea, which he reached at a point a few miles south of Vera Cruz. Here he blessed the four young men who had accompanied him and bade them return to their homes, with his promise that one day in the future he would return and restore his kingdom among them.

Then the old and weary man called to the sea, and out of the waters came a raft of serpents. He stepped upon this strange craft and was carried away into the land of the sun's beginning. He left behind him a priesthood that perpetuated with esoteric rites the Mysteries of the Feathered Serpent. There is every indication that the cult of Quetzalcoatl was kept secret, a precaution necessary in the face of the opposition of the primitive indigenous sects.

There are several accounts of the death or departure of Quetzalcoatl. The conflict is due in part to the legends being derived from different tribes, and in part to the Spanish methods of gathering the reports. These invaders took slight interest in the native traditions, until they had destroyed most of the available sources of information. Later, even the converted Indians were uncertain of their



tribal history. There is reason to believe, however, that some sacred records were intentionally suppressed and were never available to the missionaries. The people of Mexico claim to have sacred accounts of the mysteries of their religion and the origin of their race. There is mention of the *Divine Book* written by Tezcucan, a wise man or wizard, whose name means Lord of the Great Hand. This was supposed to contain the account of the migration of the



—From an original photograph

#### AUGUSTUS LePLONGEON

The archaeologist is shown seated among the heads of feathered serpents which he discovered in the ruins at Chichen Itza.

Aztecs from Asia. Baron de Waldeck claimed that the book had once been in his possession. De Bourbourg thought it was the *Dresden Codex*, and Bustamante wrote that native historians had a copy in their possession at the time of the fall of Mexico. There is good probability that manuscripts of great value survived the Spanish Colonial period and are still available to certain qualified persons.

Augustus LePlongeon, known to the Yucatecans as Great Black Beard, was one of the few Americanists to be accepted into the confidence of the ever-reticent Indians. They told him enough to convince a thoughtful man of the existence of Esoteric Schools in the Mayan area. "That sacred mysteries," writes LePlongeon, "have existed in America from times immemorial, there can be no doubt. Even setting aside the proofs of their existence, that we gather from the monuments of Uxmal, and the descriptions of the trials of initiation related in the sacred book of the Quiches, we find vestiges of them in various other countries of the Western Continent.

"The rites and ceremonies of initiation were imported in Peru by the ancestors of Manco Capac, the founder of the Inca dynasty, who were colonists from Central America, as we learn from an unpublished MS, written by a jesuit father, Red. Anello Oliva, at the beginning of the year 1631, in Lima; and now in the library of the British Museum in London."\*

A number of authors have tried to prove that Quetzalcoatl was a foreigner who, reaching the shores of the New World at an early time, attempted the civilization of the aboriginal tribes. Lord Kingsborough favored the possibility that this wanderer was the Apostle Thomas, and that the ancient Central American Indians came under Christian or Jewish influence.

Always deeply concerned with the possibilities of linking the worship in the Americas with the religions of the Near East, his lordship writes: "The Messiah is shadowed in the Old Testament under many types; such as those of a lion, a lamb, a roe, the morning star, (or the planet Venus, otherwise called Lucifer,) the sun, light, a rock, a stone, the branch, the vine, wine, bread, water, life, the way, and he

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\*See *Sacred Mysteries Among the Mayas and the Quiches*.



is there recognized in the triple character of a king, a priest, and a prophet. It is very extraordinary that Quetzalcoatl, whom the Mexicans believed equally to have been a king, a prophet, and a pontiff, should also have been named by them Ceyacatl, or the morning star; Tlavizcalpantecutli, or light; Mexitli, or the vine, (for Torquemada said that the core of the aloe, from which the Mexicans obtained wine, was so called); Votan, or the heart, metaphorically signifying life; and Toyliatlaquatl, 'manjar de nuestra veda,' bread, (for his body made of dough was eaten by the Mexicans.)"\*

Las Casas, quoting Padre Francisco Hernandez, says that an old Yucatecan described the ancient religion of his people thus: "That [they] recognized and believed in God who dwells in heaven, and that this God was Father and Son and Holy Spirit, and that the Father was called Icona, who had created men and all things, that the Son was called Bacab, and that he was born of a virgin called Chibirias, who is in heaven with God; the Holy Spirit they termed Echuac." The son Bacab was scourged and crowned with thorns, was tied upon a cross with extended arms, where he died; but after three days he arose and ascended into heaven to be with his father. Dr. Alexander, who reports this story in his book, is inclined to feel that it is confused and probably distorted by the Spanish recorder. On the other hand, the universal distribution of the basic theme may be explained another way.

Among the Lacandones, Quetzalcoatl is still represented as a snake with many heads. There is an account that this snake was killed and eaten at times of great national peril, especially at eclipses, which were regarded as portents of disaster. It was believed by the Mayas that Kulkulkan descended invisibly from the sky and personally received

\*See *Antiquities of Mexico*.



the offerings during certain great feasts held in his honor. (For details consult *The Mythology of All Ages*, Vol. XI, *Latin American*, by Hartley Burr Alexander.)

Daniel Brinton, in his *Essays of an Americanist*, devoted some thought to the magical powers attributed to the priests of Central America. He mentioned Father Baeza and an English priest, Thomas Gage, who reported cases of sorcerers transforming themselves into animals, and performing miracles. De Bourbourg was not entirely convinced that ventriloquism, animal magnetism, or the tricks familiarly employed by conjurers explained the mysteries of nagualism, as the black art of these Indians is called. Brinton quotes from the *Popul Vuh*: "Truly this Gucumatz [Quetzalcoatl] became a wonderful king. Every seven days he ascended to the sky, and every seven days he followed the path to the abode of the dead; every seven days he put on the nature of a serpent and he became truly a serpent; every seven days he put on the nature of an eagle and again of a tiger, and he became truly an eagle and a tiger; . . ." It is evident from available authorities that the Mayas and Aztecs had an extensive body of legendry and lore, which originated in the mysteries of their religions and proves the existence of an elaborate system of secret rites and ceremonies.

In the form of a feathered snake, Quetzalcoatl overshadowed a dynasty of rulers and priests, some of whom later assumed his name and even his mask-symbol. These later Quetzalcoatl have been confused, like the several Zoroasters of Persia, into one person, with the resulting conflict in dates. Recent excavations would indicate that the cult of the Feathered Serpent was established before the beginning of the Christian Era and did not arise in the 10th or 11th century A. D. as held by some modern archaeologists. It is more likely that the ancient hero was said

to have been reborn or to have overshadowed a later leader of the nation.

All the accounts imply that the religious Order which served the Mysteries of Quetzalcoatl was long established. Those who followed in the way which he had prescribed lived most severe lives. Children were consecrated to his temples from their birth and were marked by a special collar. At the end of the second year the child was scarified in the breast. When it was seven years old it entered a seminary where it took vows covering personal conduct and public duties, including prayers for the preservation of its family and its nation. There were many of these priestly Brotherhoods, and the Spanish missionaries, in spite of their theological prejudices and intolerances, were forced to admit that the Aztec priests were excellent scholars and lived austere and pure lives. It was said of these missionaries that "in Quetzalcoatl, who taught charity, gentleness, and peace, they thought they saw a disciple of Jesus Christ."

The kings of the Mexican nations, like those of ancient Egypt, were also initiates of the State Mysteries. Torquemada described the attainments of Nazahualpilli, the king of Texcuco. This learned man gathered about him masters of the sciences and arts, and gained a wide reputation as an astrologer and seer. When Montezuma was elected to rule over the complex of Nahuatlán nations, King Nazahualpilli stood before the young man and congratulated the entire nation for having selected such a ruler: "Whose deep knowledge of heavenly things insured to his subjects his comprehension of those of an earthly nature."\* The interpreter of the *Collection of Mendoza* described Montezuma as: "By nature wise, an astrologer and philosopher, and skilled and generally versed in all the arts, both in those of a civil nature, and from of the military, as well as those

\*See Kingsborough's *Antiquities of Mexico*.



his extreme gravity and state, the monarchy under his sway began to verge towards empire."

The great serpent clothed in quetzal plumes certainly belonged to another race and came from an unknown country. Lucien Biart says: "It is an incontestable fact that Quetzalcoatl created a new religion, based upon fasting, penitence, and virtue." In skillful trades and in metal working, this Amerindian savior reminds one of the craftsman of Tyre who cast the ornaments for Solomon's Temple. As a benefactor of his people, as a liberator of men's minds and hearts, this Nahuatl demigod certainly revealed the attributes of the "Master Builder."

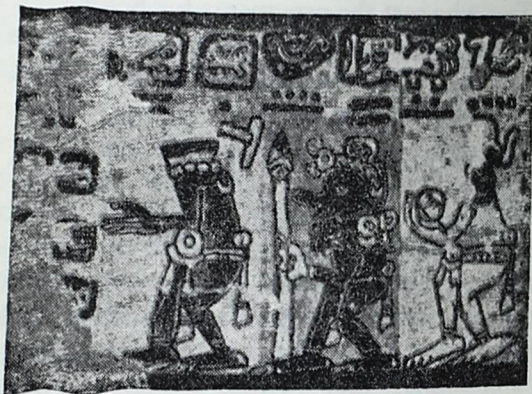
### *The Mysteries of Xibalba*

Scattered through the jungle of Yucatan and extending northward into Chiapas and southward into Honduras and Guatemala are the remains of ancient cities and the ruins of old cultural centers, religious or educational, dedicated to scientific research and the investigation of the spiritual mysteries of human life. These shrines and temples are adorned with numerous religious emblems and figures, and closely resemble the temples and schools of the esoteric tradition which were scattered through the Mediterranean countries, North Africa, and the Near East.

The Aztecs inhabiting the valley of Mexico certainly derived much of their cultural impetus from the more highly civilized Mayas. These Nahuas practiced elaborate rites and ceremonies, and recognized a large pantheon of divinities. It seems unlikely that the Aztecs patterned their religious concepts from some inferior cultural tradition. There are positive indications that the tribes of Central Mexico had received an important intellectual stimulus from the Mayas, and even found it expedient to acknowledge this indebtedness.



The physical remains of the Mayan civilization are sufficiently impressive to indicate a highly advanced people, whose religious institutions and rites had reached a considerable degree of refinement. Most early writers, in an attempt to estimate the cultural attainments of these nations, have been overinfluenced by the early theologians and scientific enthusiasts who invaded the field with a variety of concepts and preconceptions.



—From the *Codex Troano*

THE BLACK DEITY HOLDING THE SPEAR IS BELIEVED TO REPRESENT THE HERO-GOD VOTAN AS HE APPEARS IN THE SURVIVING MANUSCRIPTS OF THE MAYAS

The empires of the Mayas and Aztecs were resplendent with edifices dedicated to their faiths. There were magnificent shrines, temples, and altars, some to sanguinary deities, and others to benign and kindly gods. The State Mysteries, however, were seldom performed in the sanctuaries of popular worship. Neophytes traveled to remote places, and if they went uninvited, seldom returned. Throughout the jungles are the ruins of extraordinary buildings constructed for unknown purposes. The Mysteries of Xibalba, as recorded in the *Popul Vuh*, and traditionally associated

with the culture-hero Votan, were given in such an architectural complex, which served as an entrance to a mysterious world beyond the dimensions of the material mind.

Such "gateways" existed in all the old countries where the Mystery religion originally flourished. Obviously, archaeologists cannot discover the secret rites merely by grubbing among the overturned and broken stones. As the priesthoods were not considerate enough to label their monuments, there is little left today even to excite curiosity. Fortunately, however, the esoteric tradition survives in the racial subconscious, and its violated schools and colleges need not be physically restored. When such restoration is attempted, the buildings usually reveal that they were designed as symbols of the cosmos.

If the Mystery system existed in the Western Hemisphere, as the landmarks indicate, it must have produced its initiates and adepts. These, in turn, became the leaders and saviors of their peoples. The wonder-working hero, whose deeds enriched all tribal traditions, always and everywhere performed the same miracles, possessed the same powers, and made the same personal sacrifices.

The Mystery School required not only a hierarchy for its maintenance and perpetuation, but also appropriate places of initiation partly underground or adjacent to grottoes and caverns. It required also a body of lore peculiarly significant, participation in which conferred special rights and privileges. A people which had reached the mental platform of the Mayas would not have accepted a philosophy of life that was without profound and significant values. Pagan priesthoods did not initiate those of feeble mind, but selected for spiritual advancement persons of high attainment and mature judgment.

Albert Reville, in the *Hibbard Lectures*, 1894, notes of the religion of the plumed serpent: "There was something



mysterious and occult about the priesthood of this deity, as though it were possessed of divine secrets or promises, the importance of which it would be dangerous to undervalue."

It is fortunate, indeed, that at least one manuscript relating to the religious Mysteries formerly practiced in the Mayan area has been recovered. The *Popul Vuh*, or *The Senate Book of the Quiches*, the Record of the Community, has survived the numerous vicissitudes which have conspired to prevent the perpetuation of the literary monuments of Central America. It was tolerated by the early missionaries who, observing certain similarities to their own Scriptures, preserved the work as a means of persuading the Indians to a more speedy baptism. In the 17th century, it was rescued from a fate worse than oblivion by the Dominican monk, Don Ramon de Ordonez y Aguiar, dean and chancellor of the archbishopric of Ciudad Real. The work was deposited in the library of the convent at Chichicastenango by its scholiast, Ximenes, where it remained until 1830.

The manuscript of the *Popul Vuh* was rediscovered about 1855 by Dr. Scherzer in the library of the University of San Carlos, Guatemala City. Through the industry and scholarship of that ardent antiquarian, the Abbe Bras-seur de Bourbourg, this mysterious book of the Quiches came at last to the French language, where it lingered for years awaiting English translation. Dr. Scherzer was responsible for a Spanish version published in Vienna in 1856. The first English translation has remained practically unknown to students of Central American archaeology, as it appeared serially in *The Word*, a magazine devoted to Theosophical and related subjects. The translation was made by Kenneth S. Guthrie, MA., Ph.D., M.D., and was based upon the French text.\* A new English translation

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\*The *Popul Vuh* commenced with the issue of *The Word* for October 1905.



from the Spanish of Adrián Recinos has just been issued by the University of Oklahoma Press. This version is by Delia Goetz and Sylvanus G. Morley, and includes important introductory and commentary material.

Writing under the pseudonym, Aretas, James Pryse issued part of the *Popul Vuh* with learned commentaries under the title, *The Book of the Azure Veil*. This ran in *Lucifer*, a Theosophical magazine, between September 1894 and February 1895. It concluded with a note that circumstances made it impossible for the translator to finish the work.

Pryse suggests that the god Quetzalcoatl was known in Peru under the name of Amaru. He writes: "From the latter name comes our word America. *Amaruca* is, literally translated, 'Land of the Plumed Serpent.' The priests of this God of Peace, from their chief centre in the Cordilleras, once ruled both Americas. All the Red men who have remained true to the ancient religion are still under their sway. One of their strong centres was in Guatemala, and of their Order was the author of the book called *Popul Vuh*."

Although Dr. Scherzer published his copy under the title, *Las Historias del origen de los Indios de Guatemala, par el R. P. F. Francisco Ximenes*, this is misleading. Ximenes was not the author, but acted in the capacity of scribe, translator, and commentator. The work is said to have been compiled originally in the 17th century by a Guatemalan who had been converted to Christianity. Most American Indians are unsatisfactory converts, for they accept new beliefs without discarding old convictions. This is a most fortunate state of affairs, as there is little indication that the indigenous mythology has been compromised. The source of the material compiled by this convert is completely unknown, but it could well have been derived from a secret book or from oral tradition guarded in the sanc-

tuaries of the Mysteries. To have secured it, the compiler must himself have been a priest or initiate. Certainly, the *Popul Vuh* is by far the outstanding available text on pre-Columbian mythology and cosmogony.

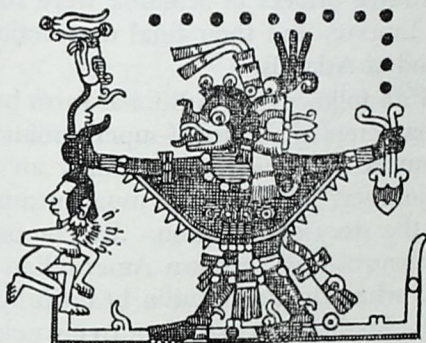
The Quichean scribe, in his introduction to the *Popul Vuh*, writes: "The following is what we shall write, and we place it in writing because, since the 'Word of God' has been promulgated, and hereafter during the cycle of Christianity, the Book of the Azure-green-veil is no longer to be seen, in which it could be clearly perceived that it had come from the further shore of the Sea; which Book has been called 'The Record of our existence in the Overshadowing World, and how we there beheld Light and Life.'" (Note: This translation by Pryse is somewhat fuller than that given by Guthrie, and seems to be more in the spirit of the Quiche tradition.) The implication is that the work originated behind the Azure Veil. This can have two meanings: either the veil which divides the spiritual universe from the material world, or the veil in the temple of initiation, behind which are the Seven Lords of the Great Heart.

The *Popul Vuh* consists of a mythology gradually mingling in its descent with the beginnings of history. The early part deals almost entirely with superhuman beings, and the latter part with the heroic deeds of authentic personages. It opens with a description of the creation. All was calm and silent, and the face of the earth was not yet to be seen. In the eternal darkness and quietude was the Creator—the Lord and Maker—and Gucumatz, the plumed serpent. They were surrounded with green and azure, and they were those who engendered. Then "The Word" came and spake with them, and they joined their counsels. Those who engender then said: "Let it be done. Let the waters retire and cease to obstruct, to the end that it be sown, and that the light of day shine in the heavens and upon the



earth; for we shall receive neither glory nor honor from all that we have created and formed until human beings exist, endowed with sentience." Thus the Creator said: "Earth," and immediately it was formed.\*

The book proceeds much in the spirit of the Scriptures of other nations. It is divided generally into four parts: cosmogony, theogony, anthropology, and regeneration through initiation. It is presented in semihistorical form



—From Seler's *Codex Vaticanus* Nr. 3773

REPRESENTATION OF THE BAT GOD  
FROM THE CODEX FEJERVARY—Mayer 41.

This deity, under the name Camazotz, occurs  
as Lord of the Bats in the Mysteries of Xibalba

and includes the initiation of its heroes into the Mysteries of Xibalba.

The heroes of the *Popul Vuh* are subjected to several ordeals or tests of courage, fortitude, and skill. The seventh test took place in the House of the Bat. This was a subterranean labyrinth inhabited by weird monsters and ruled over by Camazotz, a fearful creature with the body of a man and the wings and head of a bat.

\*Digested from *The Popul Vuh. The Mythic and Heroic Sagas of the Kiches of Central America*, by Lewis Spence (London, 1908).



Naturally, the account is clothed in the culture symbolism of the Mayas, but it is certainly to be compared with such productions as the Finnish *Kalavala* and the Icelandic *Eddas*. Guthrie presents a number of important parallelisms to the Mysteries of the Egyptians, Chaldeans, and Greeks. According to him, the twelve trials or tests through which the neophytes pass are analogous with the signs of the zodiac. He goes so far as to hazard the speculation that the twelve princes of Xibalba were the rulers of the Atlantean Empire, and their final destruction referred to the tragic end of Atlantis.

The *Popul Vuh* follows the traditional form by involving its principle characters in a series of superhuman and supernatural adventures. The work is certainly an account of the "perilous journey," which is the usual means employed to veil thinly the story of initiation. By comparison with the oral traditions of the Northern Amerindian tribes, the legend unfolds what Dr. Paul Radin beautifully calls "the road of light." Medicine priests have freely acknowledged that in dreams and trances they could leave their bodies and travel to the abodes of the gods and the dead. To make this journey while still living is initiation, for it is conscious participation in the fact of immortality.

In some cults the neophyte was given sacred drugs to intensify his psychic faculties, as in the case of the notorious Peyote sect, or was subjected to hypnotic influence, like the followers of the ghost-shirt religion. By some means a condition of death was simulated and the consciousness or superior self passed through certain internal experiences, of which at least a partial memory was preserved.

The entire process of creation took place within the green and azure coils of the plumed serpent. On several continents the serpent was among the important symbols of the initiate-priest. Sometimes the serpent stands erect and

is crowned, as in Egypt, or it may be winged as among the Mongolians, or feathered and plumed as throughout the Americas. Obviously, the natives did not intend to imply



—Drawing by Dr. LePlongeon

#### FEATHERED SERPENT PROTECTING A WARRIOR

An original tracing from the frescoes in the Temple  
of the Tigers at Chichen Itza.

that they believed in the actual existence of winged snakes, for no such creatures ever existed among them. The ser-



pent was a wisdom symbol, and when plumed it meant that wisdom had been given wings and had become spirit-wisdom, or illumination.

Pryse suggests that Matthew 10:16 explains the symbolism of the snake-bird: "Behold, I send you as sheep [neophytes] into the midst of wolves [the profane]: be ye therefore wise as serpents [magicians], and guileless as doves [mystics]." Mr. Pryse was a Greek scholar and his translation differed slightly from the King James Version. He felt that the quetzal had the same meaning as dove, and that the creature combining the serpent-wisdom and the bird-intuition or -inspiration represented the adept, in whom the mind and heart doctrine were completely reconciled.

The conflict between the initiate and the adversary, or the paths of white and black magic, is always present. In the story of Deganawida, the power of evil was personified by Atotarho, an old war chieftain, who had a cluster of venomous serpents on his head in place of hair. The Mexican Quetzalcoatl was attacked by the red god of war. The adversary personified either older cults which opposed the establishment of the benevolent Mysteries or later cults responsible for the destruction of these institutions. In either case an inferior state of spiritual enlightenment was implied. The Mysteries were institutions of liberation and were naturally opposed by groups seeking to keep their people in bondage through ignorance. The struggle was, therefore, between religion as temporal authority and the Mystery faith—the internal "road of light." The ruins of the past explain why it was the common belief that the men of good spirit, the initiates, were sacrificed to the material ambitions of temporal rulers.



*American Indian Mysticism*

All the aboriginal tribes of North America practiced mystical and magical rites, and vestiges of an esoteric tradition, served by a priestly class distinguished for sagacity and personal integrity, are still to be found among surviving groups. Scattered over a vast area and divided further by lack of a common language, these nomadic bands were approaching the horizon of national existence when the European colonists conquered their lands, decimated their tribes, and destroyed their cultural patterns. So diversified were the traditions of these peoples that it is difficult to summarize their beliefs and doctrines, especially after their legends, histories, and religious institutions were corrupted by outside influences.

The European colonists were of no mind to search for the mystical secrets of the Indian "life-way." These settlers brought their own religious beliefs, which they were resolved to force upon the natives. There were no ethnologists or anthropologists among the Puritans, and many important landmarks of Indian philosophy were destroyed before they had been honestly investigated or appraised. Most of the tribal lore was in the keeping of priests and elders, and if these were killed or died without finding suitable successors the traditions ended. Even today older Indians find it difficult to select younger men to perpetuate the sacred institutions. Thus it is unwise to assume that from available fragments a complete picture of Indian mysticism can be reconstructed.

The Indian has always been an individualist, and neither circumstance nor inclination induced him to form extensive intertribal organizations. His way of life and the vast silences of his homeland caused him to turn within himself for courage, wisdom, and faith. He could not visit distant shrines of learning or sit at the feet of famous teachers.

There were no books to ponder and no ancient sages to guide his religious convictions. Few strangers visited his camp with news or opinions from far places. He was part of a small family, and the tribal life, with its simple lore, was his only source of cultural tradition.

A thoughtful observer of Nature about him, the Indian lived constantly in the presence of mysteries, with no reference frame other than his own imagination. Though stoical in appearance, he was highly emotional, as indicated by his songs, dances, and festivals. His sensory perceptions were acute, and his legends indicate strong dramatic instincts.

Among advanced tribes, according to Dr. Franz Boas: ". . . an elaborate series of esoteric doctrines and practices exists, which are known to only a small portion of the tribe, while the mass of the people are familiar only with part of the ritual and with its exoteric features. For this reason we often find the religious beliefs and practices of the mass of a tribe rather heterogeneous as compared with the beliefs held by the priests. Among many of the tribes in which priests are found, we find distinct esoteric societies, and it is not by any means rare that the doctrines of one society are not in accord with those of another. . . . Esoteric forms of religion in charge of priests are found among the tribes of the arid region of the Southwest, the tribes of the southern Mississippi basin, and to a less extent among the more northerly tribes on the Plains. It would seem that, on the whole, the import of the esoteric teachings decreases among the more northerly and northeasterly tribes of the continent."\*

The medicine priests were trained by their predecessors or were called to their life work by some miraculous inci-

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\*See *Handbook of American Indians*, Smithsonian Institution, Bulletin 30, article "Religion."

dent. The little Indian boy who early in life showed a tendency to dreams and visions was encouraged to select this career. In a highly organized tribal system, he was initiated into the religious institutions of his nation, receiving the lore of the old priests and fragments of tribal history. If he belonged to some small, wandering band, his entire spiritual education had come from within and was induced by fasting and vigil. The vigil was the most widely practiced religious discipline of the Amerinds. In all matters of emergency or great decision the Indian sought solitude. He went alone to some high place, built a small campfire,



—From Emerson's *Indian Myths*

AMERINDIAN PICTOGRAPH OF MANABOZHO, THE GOD  
OF LIGHT AND THE HERO-FRIEND OF MANKIND

planted about him a circle of prayer plumes, smoked the ceremonial pipe, and waited through the long hours of the night for the "voices."

The "voices" instructed him in the herbs of healing, taught him the songs and dances, and brought him news of what was transpiring in distant places. There are many stories about medicine priests learning to leave their bodies at will and journeying into the shadowland to guide the dying to the home of ghosts. Many of these grand old mystics were wise in the ways of the spirit, and should be regarded as duly initiated members of Esoteric Orders.



The miraculous powers of the medicine priests extended over a wide variety of phenomena. They healed the sick, protected their tribes, directed the migrations of their peoples, and sought by extrasensory means the location of food, water, and other necessities. They predicted the future, induced rain and storms, projected themselves to distant places, and read the hearts and minds of their fellow men. It was in their power to induce visions and trances, and to receive the impressions of the star-spirits. They also gained considerable proficiency in the mesmeric and hypnotic arts.

Charles F. Lummis, who spent many years among the Southwest Indians of the United States, described the miracles performed by the medicine priests. Although naturally skeptical, his experiences among the Navajo and Pueblo Indians impressed him deeply. Mr. Lummis mentioned how Indians seated in their medicine lodge created miniature thunderstorms within the room, accompanied by flashes of forked lightning, while the outside sky was entirely clear. He says: "How the effects are produced I am utterly unable to explain, but they are startlingly real." He was also impressed by the ability of the priests to change themselves into animals in the presence of spectators. Some priests could create an artificial sun inside the lodge. This miniature luminary rose in the eastern side of the room, crossed overhead, and set in the west during the performance of the sacred chants.

Amerindian priests grow the sacred corn in exactly the same way that the East Indian mendicant grows his mango tree. The magician plants the seed which grows immediately, and about three hours later the stalk is laden with fully developed ears of corn.

Other writers have reported that in some of the medicine lodges the Indians are able to levitate large stones and to

cause their own bodies to float in the air. Unprejudiced observers have been forced to conclude that among most tribes of Amerinds magical rituals are performed involving the use of natural forces beyond the normal experience of human beings.\*

The Amerindic concept of cosmogony paralleled, in a general way, that of the Chaldeans and other peoples who dwelt in the valley of the Euphrates. The world consisted



—From Lummis' *Some Strange Corners of Our Country*

#### NAVAJO INDIAN MAGICIANS GROWING THE SACRED CORN

of three regions, with human beings inhabiting the surface of the central zone. Above this middle land was an airy expanse extending to the abode of the Sky-Father. Below the surface were subterranean levels extending downward to the place of the earth-mother. This cavernous region was like the dark and shadowy underworld of the pre-Homeric Greeks.

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\*See *Some Strange Corners of Our Country*, by Charles F. Lummis.



In the Southwest legends, human beings originated beneath the earth in a kind of paradisiacal land. There, also, were mountains, valleys, and beautiful plains, and a sun and moon that lighted the region. In the beginning everyone was happy, but later an evil deed brought upon them the wrath of the gods. In most accounts this lovely shadow-land was destroyed by a flood. In some miraculous manner a few righteous persons were preserved and took refuge on a tall plant, which, growing rapidly, finally broke through the surface of the middle land, bringing the survivors to safety.

The secrets of healing, prophecy, and magic came to the Indian from an order of beings called manitos. This Algonquian word is now applied to the concept of powerful governing spirits. The manitos were not actually gods, but superhuman manlike creatures, possessing extraordinary attributes and frequently considered as giants. The size factor, however, is figurative rather than literal. The manitos were a divine invisible tribe—masters of magic—to whom human beings could turn for help and guidance whenever necessity arose.

The effort to explain the term *manito* as only signifying a "wonderful power" and synonymous with the Iroquois *orenda* is not sufficient to meet the requirements of the Indian religious philosophy. *Orenda* conveys more precisely a power or energy universally present in animate and inanimate creatures, and manifesting through the vital processes which cause things to exist, to function, and to affect other existing and functioning things. It might be safer to assume that the manitos represented the intelligence controlling and directing the "wonderful power." The Indian, therefore, was confronted with the same basic question which disturbs even the most advanced physicist;



namely: Is there a supreme intelligence governing universal procedure?

"The religious concepts of the Indians," writes Dr. Boas, "may be described in two groups—those that concern the individual, and those that concern the social group, such as tribe and clan. The fundamental concept bearing on the religious life of the individual is the belief in the existence of magic power, which may influence the life of man, and which in turn may be influenced by human activity. In this sense magic power must be understood as the wonderful qualities which are believed to exist in objects, animals, men, spirits, or deities, and which are superior to the natural qualities of man."\*

Most religions and metaphysical philosophies include hierarchies of divine creatures, or tutelary spirits, as mediators between the Supreme Being and mortals. The manitos acted as wise distributors of the orenda. The Indian fashioned these demigods in his own likeness, but bestowed upon them superior powers. The manitos were aware of the most secret human thoughts and the most pressing human needs, and were capable of responding immediately to the rituals of the priests and elders. When the medicine man journeyed to the spirit land, he might be invited to attend a council of manitos. When he came to the Great Lodge in the sky, it resembled an earthly council place, except that it was larger, more elegant, and usually filled with a strange light. The manitos were venerable sachems, usually handsome old men, their faces full of kindness. There was a council fire, the smoking of the calumet, and the usual speeches and discussions. The Lodge was a kind of superphysical senate where all matters of grave import were decided. When the session was concluded, the priest

\*See *Handbook of American Indians*, Smithsonian Institution, Bulletin 30, article "Religion."

returned to his people along the "sky road" and reported the decisions of the Great Lodge.

Between the manitos and mankind were the souls of the illustrious dead. These were the Olds and the Trues, the sages of long ago, the great chieftains, warriors, and statesmen. They had led their people in life, so they continued to guard them from the other land, speaking through the medicine men. It seemed natural to the Amerinds that the heroes who had gone before should continue to serve the tribes they had guided in the long ago.

Totemism was a kind of heraldry among the Indians. The totem was the clan symbol; but more than that, it was a channel for the distribution of orenda through the social and political structure of the clan. The totemic animal or bird was a spirit guardian, helpful because the creature possessed attributes superior in some particular to those of man. The attribute might be swiftness, strength, cunningness, or resourcefulness, and these qualities the totem creature shared with those under its guardianship. Each Indian also had his own totem, and while it took a familiar form it was identical in principle with the guardian daemon described in works on the Egyptian and Chaldean Mysteries. It was considered a good omen to see one's totem while practicing vigil, or in dreams or trances. It proved the proximity of a protecting power.

The Abbe Phavenet, a missionary to the Algonquians, identifies the totem (from *ote*, the *ototeman* of the Chipewas) with the manito concept in these words: "It is to be presumed that in uniting into a tribe, each clan preserves its *manitou*, the animal which in the country whence the clan came was the most beautiful or the most friendly to man, or the most feared, or the most common; the animal which was ordinarily hunted there and which was the ordinary subsistence of the clan, etc.; and this animal be-



came the symbol of each family and that each family transmitted it to its posterity to be the perpetual symbol of each tribe [clan]." Modern ethnologists have emphasized that the popular usage of the term *totem* is incorrect. The symbol is not strictly religious, but involves a social and family concept with emphasis upon the importance of kinship.

Many tribes, especially the Plains Indians, believed that thunder and lightning were caused by enormous birds—the rumbling sounds in the sky accompanying storms were due to the flapping of their wings, and the flashes of light were caused by the opening and closing of their eyes. In some groups, only one thunderbird was recognized; in other tribes, there were several of various colors or a family of them. The appearance of the bird, or birds, is not definitely given; it might be similar to a large hawk, an eagle, or even a grouse. The thunderbird could use its wings as a bow to shoot arrows, and small meteors were believed to be the heads of these arrows. On the Plains, thunderstorms were said to result from a contest between a thunderbird and a huge rattlesnake, or dragonlike monster. Persons struck by lightning, if they recovered, were accepted as sages or holy men, having received a very strong medicine from the experience.

In some areas the thunderbird was closely associated with the religious Mysteries or Societies. Those who saw this creature in their vigils usually considered themselves as intended for a religious life. The myths and legends of the thunderbird are similar to the European and Asiatic accounts of the fabled phoenix, which nested in flames and symbolized initiation and adeptship. Early drawings of the Great Seal of the United States indicate that the bird represented thereon was a phoenix rather than an eagle. Like the Mexican coat of arms, which shows an eagle with



a serpent in its claws, the American device is strongly reminiscent of a thunderbird. These creatures were also said to inhabit a sky-world above the clouds, and served as messengers between mortals and the heavenly beings.

Farther south the thunderbird symbol merged with the quetzal and the serpent feathered with quetzal plumes. The quetzal was identical in meaning with the phoenix of Asia, North Africa, and the Near East. The feathered-serpent symbolism can be traced back to the hooded Nagas, or serpent gods of India, and to the winged serpents which occur in the writings and sculpturings of the Egyptians.

The serpent was the messenger and servant of the earth-mother because it dwelt below ground. For this reason rattlesnakes were released during the snake dances, in order that they might carry the petitions of the tribe to the mother who dwelt below. Birds were also carriers of tidings, and as they flew upward they bore with them prayers to the Great Father who lived in the Sky-Lodge. The thunderbird was the most powerful and was the lord of flying things. The thunderbird and the feathered snake were symbolical of the mysteries of the upper and lower regions. Priestly Orders served this twofold cult, the secrets of which were revealed only by an internal mystical experience.

Brinton, describing various devices used by the Amerindian tribes to conserve their religious secrets, says: "All these stratagems were intended to shroud with impenetrable secrecy the mysteries of the brotherhood. With the same motive, the priests formed societies of different grades of illumination, only to be entered by those willing to undergo trying ordeals whose secrets were not to be revealed under the severest penalties. The Algonkins had three such grades, the *waubeno*, the *meda*, and the *jossakeed*, the last being the highest. To this no white man was ever admitted.

All tribes appear to have been controlled by these secret societies."\*

Among the Amerindians, Secret Societies existed for the perpetuation and enlargement of the choicest knowledge of the tribe. There were war associations, healing cults, and Fraternities concerned with the religious Mysteries, the keeping of records, and the dramatization of myths. There were ethical societies, orders of mirth-makers, fire-walkers, and hunters, presided over by elders who had distinguishing regalia. Women frequently became leaders of these groups. Among the Pueblo Indians there were often a dozen or more Societies in one village. While their objectives were not always parallel, there was no friction between the memberships and they united in all common responsibilities.† The Indian was always a tolerant man on the subject of spiritual convictions. He never inquired as to the faith of his guest, but expected that every true believer would conduct himself in an honorable way. He respected the rites of strangers, and if he did not share in them or did not understand their meanings, he kept a respectful silence.

The reference to the dramatization of myths suggests that a number of Indian tribes were practicing the same methods of presenting religious Mysteries that were employed by the Greeks and Egyptians. Most Indian festivals emphasized songs and dances, but the songs were used principally to establish rhythms and the words were of slight importance. Chants were a vital element in most healing ceremonies.

Either the Western Hemisphere received a vital religious stimulus from early voyagers and travelers from distant parts or else the Indian himself by mystical experiences

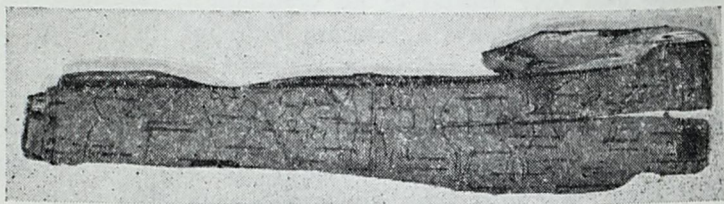
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\*See *Myths of the New World* (New York, 1876).

†See Dr. John Swanton, in *Handbook of North American Indians*, article "Secret Societies."



shared a common inspiration with the priestly castes of other nations. The psychologists would probably assume that the esoteric tradition originated in the spiritual needs of the human being, regardless of his race or place of habitation. The search for reality gradually brought into being specialized groups of intensive truth seekers. These groups produced their own leaders, and such wise men and women were acknowledged as divinely inspired, received spontaneous admiration and devotion, were obeyed for their superior endowments, and gradually became a priestly caste. As civilization enlarged the temporal state of the tribe, the religious Societies grew to become powerful institutions, as in Central America. While the tribes remained



—From Hoffman's *The Midewiwin*, etc.

#### SACRED BIRCHBARK RECORD OF THE MIDE RITUALS

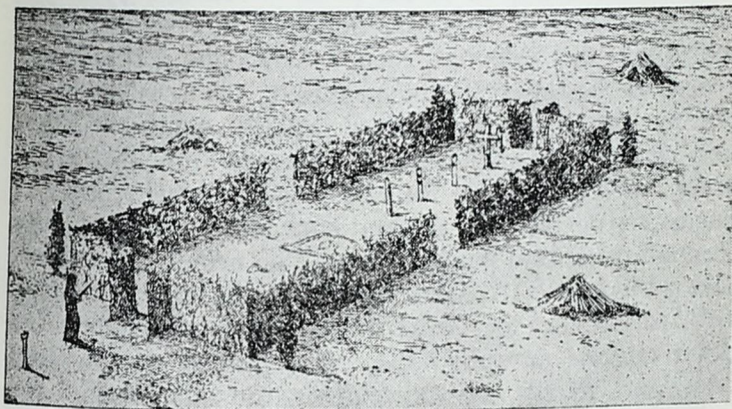
nomadic, the medicine men were less resplendent and impressive, but their functions were no less significant.

These holy persons seldom took part in war, and frequently were distinguished by a costume combining elements of male and female attire. This practice has been common throughout the religious world and has influenced the dress of pagan priests and Christian clergy alike. The androgynous human being, in whom there is a spiritual union of male and female attributes, has been widely accepted as personifying a superior type capable of a greater understanding of the Father-wisdom and Mother-love



potencies of Divinity. Such symbolism existed in all the great Esoteric Orders of the past.

While ethnologists may be reluctant to admit that the Indians had any formal concept of an esoteric religion, examination into the secret beliefs of the priests of the various tribes shows that they were verging toward the adept tradition, even if it had not matured among them. The Midewiwin, or Great Medicine Society of the Ojibways, initiated both men and women into the secrets of



—From Hoffman's *The Midewiwin*, etc.

GENERAL VIEW OF THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE LODGE OF THE MIDE

the art of healing and the control of the vital current coursing through the nerve centers of the human body. The Society of the Mides, or shamans, had birchbark rolls which depicted the arrangements of the lodges and included many strange pictographs. Of these, W. J. Hoffman writes: "To persons acquainted with secret societies, a good comparison for the Midewiwin charts would be what is called a trestle board of a Masonic order, which is printed and published and publicly exposed without exhibiting any

secrets of the order; yet it is not only significant, but useful to the esoteric in assistance to their memory as to the details of the ceremony."\*

The secrets of the Midewiwin were originally communicated to mankind by an initiate-priest, Manabozho, or Great Rabbit, who was a servant of the Good Spirit. The cross was an important symbol in the Midewiwin Rites, and it is interesting that the Mides steadfastly refused to give up their religion and be converted to Christianity.

The controversy as to the possible Masonic significance of the Midewiwin Rites may be noted, but has slight bearing upon the essential facts. Although the birchbark rolls have bestowed prominence upon the activities of this Society, other tribes practiced equally significant rituals and ceremonies. Candidates advanced through four degrees, traveling toward the east, and the lodge rooms were enclosures open to the sky and connecting with each other through doors and passageways. The neophyte was tested and subjected to trials and hazards and also was presented with a sequence of visual arrangements of symbols and other esoteric paraphernalia. The purpose of the Great Medicine Society was to enlighten the human mind and soul and to bind the initiates to the service of their people. It included a method for stimulating extrasensory perceptions and personal investigation into the secrets of Nature.

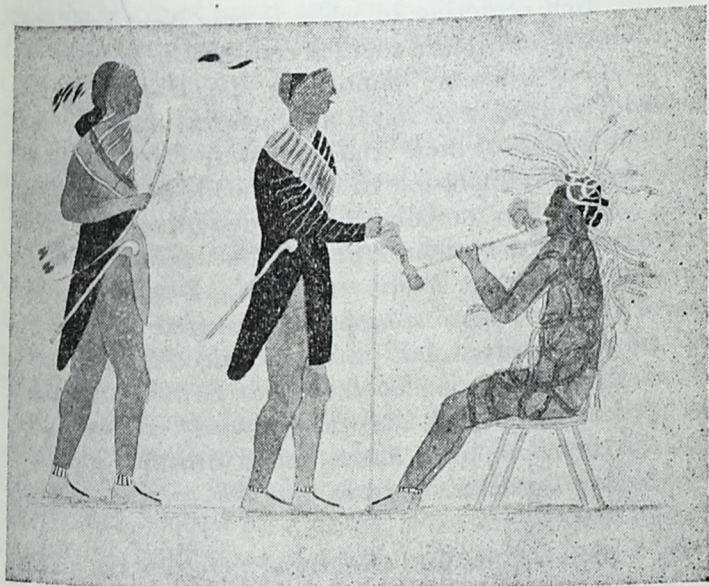
In 1919, Arthur C. Parker was invited into a secret lodge of the Senecas to witness their ceremonies. Here he heard the legend of Red Hand, a culture hero, who could hold conversation with the Great Mystery. From the Great Mystery he learned to love all the creatures of the earth, and he spoke the language of the birds and animals. Red Hand was slain by a poisoned arrow because he would not reveal to his assassin the secret of his spiritual power. The

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\*See *7th Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*.



animals, discovering by the power of scent that their brother-friend had been killed, gathered in council about his body to find a means of bringing him back to life. Each of the creatures gave part of himself to restore Red Hand to the living. At last the bear came forward, and grasping the hand of the martyred hero raised him by the strong



—From Schoolcraft's *Indian Tribes of the United States*

TWO PERSONS, POSSIBLY REPRESENTING DEGANAWIDA AND  
HIAWATHA, STANDING IN THE PRESENCE OF ATOTARHO,  
THE SORCERER-CHIEF OF THE IROQUOIS

grip of his paw. Those acquainted with the ritual of the Third Degree of the Blue Lodge of Freemasonry will realize that this story must have originated among the rituals of the Esoteric Schools.

Mr. Parker, himself a 32° Mason, sums up the account of his experience in the rites of the Senecas, thus: "Little



has been told; the door has only been held ajar the slightest space and no secrets have been revealed. There were feather wands and deerskins, but no purple robes or crowns. Yet, who shall say that the Senecas have not the thread of the legend of Osiris or that they have not an inherent Freemasonry?"\*

In the area centering in what is now New York State and extending north and south a considerable distance, the five, later six, nations comprising the Iroquois League attained a high state of social and political integrity. The two great leaders of these Amerinds were Deganawida and Hiawatha. It is impossible to study the life of Deganawida, whose coming was announced by a mysterious visitor from the heaven-world, without realizing that he fulfilled all the requirements of the adept tradition. Deganawida was born of an immaculate conception, possessed the power to work miracles, prayed and fasted, practiced the vigils, was confirmed in his mission by the Great Father, and passed through numerous trials and persecutions. Hiawatha became his first and most distinguished disciple, and these two working together sought to establish everlasting peace among their peoples.

The founder of the Inca dynasty of Peru was the initiate-statesman, Manco Capac, who flourished in the 11th century A.D. He reformed the social and religious life of the tribes of the Aymara Quichua race. In the capital city of Cuzco which he built, Manco Capac established the religion of the sun. He was a stateman of ability, and claimed to be a direct descendant of the sun god. The empire of the Incas which he founded is remembered especially for its experiments in socialized living. Peru has the distinction of having cradled the first successful Utopia.

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\*See *American Indian Freemasonry*, by Arthur C. Parker (Buffalo, 1919).

Manco Capac emerges as one of the world's outstanding social reformers, with a vision thousands of years ahead of his time. He is said to have brought with him to Peru a divine bird in a sacred wicker hamper. This golden falcon is a form of the phoenix, and testifies to the presence of the adept doctrine. Manco Capac combines in his own person the offices of priest and king, like the Melchizedeks of Christian mysticism. Although some historians may be a trifle impulsive when they suggest that Manco Capac was a Buddhist priest, there can be no doubt that the Peruvian culture was heavily influenced by symbols, rituals, and philosophical elements usually associated with the trans-Himalayan area of Central Asia.

In Deganawida, with his Great League, Quetzalcoatl-Kulkulcan and his splendid socialized empires in Mexico and Central America, and Manco Capac and the communal system which he set up in Peru, we have three clear and definite accounts of initiate-leaders establishing schools of esoteric doctrines in the Western Hemisphere. From a consideration of their attainments and the systems which they inaugurated, we can come to but one conclusion: The Mystery Schools of antiquity were represented in the Americas by institutions identical in principle and in purpose with those of Asia and the Mediterranean countries.

### *Columbus—the Admiral of the Oceans*

Prevailing historical accounts which deal with the discovery and colonization of the Western Hemisphere must some day be completely revised. Modern scholars have accepted, without proper reflection, a fabrication of lies fashioned to deceive and to prevent the recognition of facts detrimental, even dangerous, to the ulterior motives of powerful interests. Time will reveal that the continent now known as America was actually discovered and, to a con-



siderable degree, explored more than a thousand years before the beginning of the Christian Era. The true story was in the keeping of the Mystery Schools, and passed from them to the Secret Societies of the medieval world. The Esoteric Orders of Europe, Asia, and the Near East were in at least irregular communication with the priesthoods of the more advanced Amerindian nations. Plans for the development of the Western Hemisphere were formulated in Alexandria, Mecca, Delhi, and Lhasa long before most European statesmen were aware of the great Utopian program.\*

The explorers who opened the New World operated from a master plan and were agents of *rediscovery* rather than discoverers. Very little is "known" about the origin, lives, characters, and policies of these intrepid adventurers. Although they lived in a century amply provided with historians and biographers, these saw fit either to remain silent or to invent plausible accounts without substance. Does it not seem remarkable that no one is certain whether Christopher Columbus was actually an English prince, a Greek nobleman, or a Genoese sea captain? Was he granted arms without any examination into his ancestry? Why is it so difficult to ascertain the real name of the man known as Amerigo Vespucci? Who was John Cabot, whose life and exploits are but fragments rather than the sober records of a distinguished citizen? If these men were what they seemed to be, there could have been no advantage gained by such elaborate concealment. If there were a mystery, that which was hidden must have been regarded as valuable.

Plato described the vast continent of Atlantis, which sank beneath the oceans as the result of a seismic cataclysm. There are several possible interpretations of Plato's account. The lost Atlantis could represent a submerged body of

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\*See *The Mystery of Columbus*, by Jennings C. Wise.



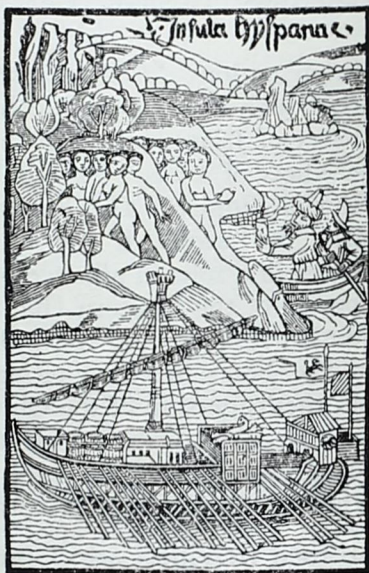
knowledge drowned in a sea of forgetfulness. This would explain and justify Bacon's restoration of the fable, which was nothing more than bringing into light matters long hidden. According to the *Critias*, the oceans became so agitated and laden with mud and slime that navigation to the west ceased. Sailors feared to go beyond the Pillars of Hercules toward those Hesperic Isles sacred to the Mysteries.

Even had Christian nations dared to violate the edicts of the Secret Schools, such audacity would have been held in check by the power of Islam, seated in the Holy House at Cairo, and the edicts of Lhasa, backed by the armed strength of the Mongol Empire. The East agreed to preserve the boundaries of Europe, if the European States would bind themselves in a solemn alliance to refrain from exploiting the resources of the Western Hemisphere. Fear of a terrible retribution from beyond the walls of Gog and Magog prevented the Popes from violating their agreement. And without the leadership of the Church, the great families dared not engage in private projects. When the appointed hour came, the Secret Societies selected their own agents to initiate the program of exploration.

"Was Columbus then working," asks Grace A. Fendler, "either as an individual or as a chosen representative of Secret Societies, to bring into expression the old Utopian ideals and to directionalize them across the Seas? Certainly this would go far to explain the charges of 'traitor'; the seizure of all his books and papers; the destruction of all portraiture and likenesses even to the usual mortuary 'busts and arms'; and the complete disappearance of many of his literary works, including the Journal of the First Voyage and the Book of the Second Voyage. All this would then have been mere inquisitional routine, with the rewriting

of his biography more or less both of political necessity and a Holy Duty.”\*

Campanella, in his *Civitas Solis*, causes a Genoese sea captain to be the guest of the Grand Master of the Knights Hospitalers. When Columbus, on the occasion of his first landfall, raised the standard of Castile, he also planted a



15TH-CENTURY WOODCUT REPRESENTING  
THE LANDING OF COLUMBUS ON  
THE ISLAND OF HISPANIOLA

banner of his own, consisting of a green cross on a white field. Was this a device of the Knights Templars?

The formal education of the man who called himself Christopher Columbus has been the subject of much speculation. The navigator wrote, in 1501, that during his many voyages to all parts of the world he had met learned men

\*See *New Truths About Columbus*.



of various races and sects and had "endeavored to see all books of cosmography, history, and philosophy and of other sciences." If the admiral had seriously endeavored to examine early works on navigation, he undoubtedly had noted the references, brief but significant, by Homer, Solon, Aristotle, Pliny, and other ancient authors to "distant lands beyond the great oceans." Plutarch's voyagers must have explored vast areas, and Verplanck Colvin summarizes the old accounts thus: "In the days of Homer, or rather before his time, navigators traveled thousands of miles out into the Atlantic, and back across it . . . they were guided in their voyages by the stars."\*

One group of "authorities" considers it probable that Columbus was little better than an illiterate sailor, and that his rudiments of learning were derived from a guild school supposed to have been established by the weavers of the city of Genoa. The opposing faction of historians insists that Columbus possessed considerable scholarship even before his celebrated journey. According to Henry Harisse, an outstanding writer on the Columbus mystery, the navigator left ninety-seven manuscripts and over twenty-five thousand marginalia, which may be considered a remarkable achievement for an illiterate. The truth is that the admiral cannot be explained without reference to the Secret Societies, which were the peculiar custodians of the exact information which he required.

The religious and mystical inclinations of the great discoverer are mentioned by most of his biographers. At times Columbus dressed in a plain robe and girdle similar to the costume of the Franciscan Order. It was reported by his son that Columbus died wearing a Franciscan frock. It is not known however, that he was directly associated

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\*See *Geographical and Mathematical Discussions of Plutarch's Accounts of Ancient Voyages to the New World.*



with this Order, even as a lay Brother. Several religious groups of the times, including Fraternities known to be connected with the esoteric tradition, favored this kind of habit. Perhaps the peculiarities of his costume were overlooked or conveniently forgotten.

The admiral regarded himself as chosen by heaven to fulfill a great mission, and was strengthened by the conviction that he was guarded and guided by the divine providence. Such contemporary reports could imply far more than modern writers would like to acknowledge. In those troublous times, it was customary for the members of Secret Societies to conceal the true source of their instructions by some general statement about heavenly guidance. The mystical instincts of the admiral, his belief in miracles, prophecies, and the doctrine of preordination have been advanced by some critics as proofs of his mental instability.

Referring to what he calls the "colossal, mystical self-confidence" of Columbus, John Bartlet Brebner writes that it was so integral a part of the navigator that "he could believe on one occasion in his voyaging that God had led him to the New Heaven and New Earth of Revelation, and in his darkest hour he knew that God spoke to him in encouragement." On his Third Voyage, the navigator believed that he heard the voice of God speaking words of strength and comfort. On his Fourth Voyage, when great emergencies threatened the entire enterprise, the admiral fell into a trance and a voice spoke to him: "O fool, and slow to believe and to serve thy God, the God of all! What did He do more for Moses, or for David His servant, than He has done for thee?"\*

Columbus may have been a disciple or student of the illuminated Raymond Lully. There is a persistent rumor

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\*See *The Explorers of North America*.

to this effect. He was also involved with the group perpetuating the political convictions of Dante. The following tribute to the Italian poet is indicative and stimulating: "Dante himself was a member of the Albigenian church, and, it is said, for a number of years officiated as pastor of that powerful organization in various European cities. He was a friend of Roger Bacon, and an associate and advisor of powerful leaders in the ancient Order of the Temple, which was at the date of his death, while apparently at the

Almirant- mayr/ Almaroans  
 vfo Hy, ygobernador/ general d'los yndes ut.  
 S. A. S.  
 X M Y  
 XPO FERENS/

A FRAGMENT OF WRITING IN THE AUTOGRAPH OF COLUMBUS  
 SHOWING HIS CRYPTIC SIGNATURE

summit of its power, actually nearing its disastrous end. Dante is said to have been an initiate of the esoteric doctrines of the Templars."\*

Columbus made use of ciphers and cryptic allegorical expressions and figures of speech. While such ciphers are known to exist in his manuscripts, no systematic effort to decode them has come to public attention. Cecil Jane conjectured that Columbus in his cryptic signatures made use of something resembling a Baconian cipher intended to convey information which could not be directly communi-

\*See *The Montana Mason*, (October 1921).

cated and to supply the clue to a secret otherwise carefully concealed.\*

Incidentally, the Columbus signature-ciphers are extremely reminiscent of the Albigenian papermakers' marks. Seraphim G. Canoutas, J. D., of the University of Athens, in his work *Christopher Columbus, a Greek Nobleman*,



—Portrait by Vasari

LORENZO DE' MEDICI, CALLED  
THE MAGNIFICENT

attempted to restore the early life of the great discoverer. His findings, calculated to sustain the title of his book, are most illuminating. The secret preparations for the colonizing of the Fortunate Isles, or "the Blessed Isles of the West," were in the keeping of the Albigenes, the Troubadours, and the chivalric Orders of Knighthood. The final phase

\*See *Contemporary Historical Review*, Vol. 1:37.



of the exploration project was left largely to the erudition of Lorenzo the Magnificent and the skill of Leonardo da Vinci. Lorenzo de' Medici was a distinguished Platonist, a patron of Secret Societies, the founder of an important philosophical school, and a subtle adversary of the Borgias. Leonardo was a faithful agent of the great Florentine prince, and one of those men possessed by the spirit of "towardness." Although Lorenzo did not live to see the fulfillment of the Great Plan, he spoke the magic word which opened for Columbus the most exclusive institutions in Europe and invested him with the temporal means for acquiring a measure of consideration from liberal princes and scholars. It was the invisible hand of the Medici that balanced on end the celebrated egg.

The conclusions of Columbus concerning the shape of the earth indicate that he was acquainted with the esoteric traditions of Asia and the Near East. He partly revealed the source of his own instructions when he declared the planet to be shaped like a pear, the upper end of which projected toward the sky, like the boss in the center of a shield. The top of this protuberance was the terrestrial paradise, where none could go except by the grace of God. The admiral noted that this shape coincided with the opinions of certain holy and wise theologians, but he failed to mention the sects or religions to which they belonged. The earth-mountain was certainly the Meru of the Brahmans and the sacred hill of the Egyptian Mysteries. Mt. Meru, like Chang Shambhala, Olympus, and the peak described in The Revelation are all veiled allusions to the Invisible Government of the earth.

Nor should it be assumed that all historical uncertainties centered around Christopher Colon, the dove of Genoa. The case of John Cabot is equally curious. There may be more than passing interest in the observations of one re-

search student: "When Columbus, in the interim between voyages disappears from public view, John Cabot appears and permanently disappears when Columbus reappears."\* It is easy to forget that John Cabot was really Giovanni Caboto, born in Genoa and a naturalized citizen of Venice. It was especially mentioned that in one of his journeys Cabot visited Mecca, and, like Columbus, was acquainted with the wise men of the Near East. It has even been suggested that he had contacted the religious and political convictions of the secret Christian sect of the Johannites, which played so large a part in the esoteric doctrines of the Templars.

Cabot conveniently found the ear of the English king, and was immediately entrusted with a delicate diplomatic mission to Denmark to arbitrate disputes over the fisheries of Iceland. Grace Fendler also notes that the records of the English Privy Purse shows a pension paid to one Antonio Cabot for several years after John Cabot was historically dead. The pension passed through the hands of an English merchant named Rici D'Americke. The voyages of Cabot were important inasmuch as they resulted in a division which gave most of North America to the English group which was free from the theological and mercenary pressures of the Spanish program.

The Great Plan reached the Western Hemisphere through a series of incidents. Many early explorers and colonizers are known to have been associated with Secret Societies. There is no historical way of determining the secret spiritual convictions of so-called conquistadors, adventurers, and founders of plantations. It is a well-established fact that arts, sciences, philosophies, and political convictions accompany less valuable merchandise along trade routes and caravan trails. Some of the colonizers

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\*See *New Truths About Columbus*, by Grace A. Fendler.



were probably unaware of the parts they were playing, and the settlements which they founded remained for generations without the strength or security to advance ideological programs. The work, then as always, was in the hands and keeping of a few initiated leaders. They were responsible for the results, and they built slowly and wisely, thinking not of their own days or of their own reputation, but of the future in which the Great Plan would be fulfilled.

### *The Colonization Scheme*

The political intrigues which Queen Elizabeth had inherited from Henry VIII plagued Her Majesty's advisors throughout her long reign. Henry had rebelled against the papacy, ousted its clergy, closed its monastic houses, confiscated its properties, and established the Church of England. Spain, motivated by both religious and secular considerations, was resolved to control England. The Spanish ambassador at the court of the Tudors was the moving spirit behind an elaborate program of espionage, and all that he could learn, glean, or deduce was dispatched posthaste to his royal master, the King of Spain.

While serving his diplomatic apprenticeship at the court of Navarre, Bacon had been initiated into the new liberalism represented throughout Europe by Secret Societies of intellectuals dedicated to civil and religious freedom. He returned to England fully aware of the intentions of Philip II, the Spanish king. Later, when the moment was propitious, he threw the weight of his literary group with the English colonization plan for America in order to prevent Spanish domination of the New World. The same political considerations apparently also induced him to develop Freemasonry as a further bulwark against the encroachments of the Spanish plot. Cherishing as he did



the dream of a great commonwealth in the New Atlantis, Bacon was resolved to prevent his plan from being frustrated by a dominant clergy, supporting and supported by an entrenched aristocracy.

It was necessary for Bacon to conceal both his purposes and the machinery for their fulfillment from the Spanish spies. If the project were prematurely revealed, it could precipitate a desperate political situation. With many courtiers secretly sympathizing with the cause of Spain, and Elizabeth's claim to the throne questioned because of Henry's numerous divorces, it was impossible to use such conventional channels as were provided by an uneasy government. Bacon protected both his cause and his country by acting privately and maturing his schemes within the hallowed walls of the Inns of Court. There in the sanctuary of the martyred Templars, who had earlier felt the full weight of ecclesiastical displeasure, he labored industriously to fashion wings for the White Horse of Britain.

The rapid progress of England in the second half of the 16th and the first half of the 17th centuries was due not only to the appearance of a select coterie of wits, but also to the more liberal atmosphere which resulted from "Harry's" religious house cleaning. After the Armada, the issues were partly clarified, but it still remained vital to protect and enlarge the English interests in the Western Hemisphere. Incidentally, the ships of the Armada carried ninety Spanish Inquisitors, with all the paraphernalia of their office, ready to set up the Inquisition in conquered England. The Pope had already claimed the three Americas for the Church, but the English colonizers were resolved to dispute this claim with every resource at their disposal.

The first permanent English settlement in North America was established at Jamestown, Virginia, on May 14, 1607. Earlier attempts resulted only in the naming of the region,

which was called Virginia in honor of Queen Elizabeth. In 1609, Sir George Somers was appointed governor of the colony of Virginia. He sailed for the New World with dignity appropriate to his office, but his arrival was delayed when his ship foundered on the Hog Islands. Later he was able to victual two pinnaces with prime pork and to proceed on his journey. The Hog Islands, so-named because of the wild swine that infested them, were renamed the Somers Islands in honor of Sir George's impromptu visit. Ultimately, however, these islands were called the Bermudas, after the Spanish navigator, Juan Bermudez.

In 1609, James I granted a charter to the Bermuda Com-



THE SOMERS ISLANDS SHILLING

pany, and in 1612, Richard More and sixty colonists from Virginia settled on one of the islands. Later, in 1616, Captain John Smith appointed Master Daniel Tucker as governor of Bermuda. The same year, a series of coins was struck off for use in the Bermudas. The history of this coinage is extremely obscure. The Hog Money, as it is often called, was of brass and in three denominations. The shilling of this issue bears on the obverse the legend "Sommer Islands," surrounding the figure of a wild boar. Above the boar is the numeral XII, signifying twelvepence. There is no date. The reverse of the coin is a ship under full sail. The wild boar on this coinage carries the definite



impression of being a heraldic device. It is identical in drawing with the crest of Lord Bacon, even to the jaunty curl of its porcine tail.

According to the meager records in the British Museum, this coinage was forbidden by James I to be exported. It seems strange that the Hog Money should have been regarded so unfavorably by the king. Why did James on two separate occasions act so strenuously to prevent the circulation of this coinage? The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1946) intimates that the coins were struck in America, but numismatic catalogues describe them as made for America. From the evidence of the coins themselves, it would seem that the Hog Money was a definite landmark, bearing witness to the operations of the Secret Society directing the early colonization program.

The adventures of Sir George Somers were quickly adapted to high drama by the literary workshop at Gray's Inn. The most obvious example of their ingenuity was *The Tempest*. This play first appeared about one and a half years after the governor had been shipwrecked. According to the chronological chart of the Shakespearean plays, *The Tempest* was first acted in 1611, was played a second time in 1613, but was not published until the great folio of 1623. It is supposed that the play was written between 1608 and 1610, but there is no data as to whether or not it was among those rewritten before final publication.

The character of Prospero, magician, philosopher, and Duke of Milan, is believed to be based upon a historical person whose name was Prospero Colonna. It is interesting that Columbus usually signed himself "Colon," and that Lord Baron has been referred to as "the little Columbus of literature." *The Tempest* also introduces an "honest old counselor," by name Gonzalo, who seems dedicated to a utopian mood. He refers to the magic isle as a "common-



wealth," and explains that if he had a plantation there (a term used in describing colonial grants in America) he would design it along communal lines, concluding:

"All things in common Nature should produce  
Without sweat or endeavor: treason, felony,  
Sword, pike, knife, gun, or need of any engine  
Would I not have: but Nature should bring forth  
Of its own kind, all foyzon, all abundance  
To feed my innocent people."

The patrons of the Virginia Company included Lord Southampton and those two, that "incomparable paire," William, Earl of Pembroke, and Philip, Earl of Montgomery, to whom the first folio of Shakespeare was dedicated. These excellent gentlemen also permitted the use of their names as patrons of that company of actors which included William Shakespeare—a tight little corporation, to say the least. So elaborate a plan would not have been necessary had the colonization program involved nothing more than the granting of land to royal favorites.

It makes little practical difference whether the flora and fauna of *The Tempest* resembles the Bermudas, or as Dr. Hale suggests, corresponds more closely with the Cuttyhunk Island off the coast of Massachusetts. The opponents of the Bermudian hypothesis insist that the play would have mentioned the wild hogs had these islands been the locale of the story. If Bacon and his Society were involved in the project, it would scarcely have been advisable for them to emphasize the hog symbol, which had already been used with discretion on several occasions. They could not afford to tie the Shakespearean productions so obviously with their scheme. They were satisfied to leave their mark and seal on the emblematic coinage.

The "brave New World," referred to by Miranda, is certainly America and not some insignificant island. Pros-

pero is the magician of the New Age, the exponent of the Baconian "method." He binds the elements to his service, and the story of his adventures is an improvisation upon the grand theme of the Utopias. It was also in this "brave New World" that he buried his magic staff and drowned his book; that is, concealed in appropriate places the formulas which were the secret of his power.

Thomas Jefferson examined the "repositories" of the Bacon group in colonial America, checked their contents, and caused them to be resealed for future ages. Several attempts have been made to locate these "philosophical tombs," including excavations in England, Newfoundland, and Virginia. What is believed to be an important Baconian vault was located, with the help of coded tombstones, in Williamsburg, Virginia, in 1938.†

After his "banishment" from public life, Bacon muses thus upon the philosophical advantages of political decline: "Methinks they are resembled by those of Sir George Somers, who being bound by his employment to another coast, was by *tempest* cast upon the Bermudas. And therefore a ship wrack'd man made full discovery of a new temperate fruitful region, which none had before inhabited; and which Mariners, who had only seen its rocks, had esteemed an inaccessible and enchanted place." In his advice to Sir George Villiers, Bacon expressed the same sentiments which had been incorporated in the Broad-sides of the Council for Virginia. According to Alexander Brown, "he may have taken these ideas from those Broad-sides, or he may have been one of the original authors of them, as he was a member of that Council."\*

The same author was so impressed by Bacon's references to "tempest and the inaccessible and enchanted Bermudas"

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†See *Foundations Unearthed*, by Marie Bauer.

\* See *Genesis of the United States*.

that he asks: "May not Bacon have aided Shakespeare in compiling *some* of his plays? . . . Bacon always had a fancy for such things." Dr. Brown also mentions the Bacon family in America, noting that Benjamin Harrison, the twenty-third President of the United States, was *doubly* descended from this family.

It is not without reason that Lord Bacon, who has been called "the moving spirit in the colonization scheme," included Christopher Columbus as one of the "great



STAMP OF NEWFOUNDLAND

Issued to commemorate the tercentenary of the colonization scheme and Lord Bacon, its guiding spirit.

inventors."\* Judge Brown writes of Bacon's participation in the settlement of Newfoundland: "It was entirely due to the Great Chancellor's influence that the king granted the advances and issued the Charters to Bacon and his associates in Guy's Newfoundland Company."† *The Colonial State Calendar* contains the following extract of patent: "To Henry, Earl of Northampton, Sir Francis Bacon, and others, for the Colony or plantation in Newfoundland from

\*See *The New Atlantis*.

†See *History of Newfoundland*.



46° to 52° N. Lat., together with the seas and islands lying within ten leagues of the coast. . . .” The same notes: “A letter is mentioned from John Smith to Lord Bacon enclosing description of New England, the extraordinary profits arising from the *fisheries*, and great facilities for *plantation*.”

William Hepworth Dixon, of the Inner Temple, writing in 1861, makes several important observations concerning the settlement of the New World. A few fragments will indicate the direction of his thinking: “In no History of America, in no Life of Bacon, have I found one word to connect him with the plantation of that great Republic. Yet, like Raleigh and Delaware, he takes an active share in the labours, a conspicuous part in the sacrifices through which the foundations of Virginia and the Carolinas are first laid. Like men of far less note, who have received far higher honours in America, Bacon pays his money into the great Company, and takes office in its management as one of the Council. To his other glories therefore must be added that of a Founder of New States. . . .

“All generous spirits rush to the defense of Virginia. Bacon joins the Company with purse and voice. Montgomery, Pembroke, and Southampton, the noble friends of Shakespeare, join it. . . . A fleet, commanded by Gates and Somers, sails from the Thames, to meet on its voyage at sea those singular and poetic storms and trials which add the Bermudas to our empire and The Tempest to our literature. . . .

“One hundred and seventy-five years after Walter Raleigh laid down his life in Palace Yard for America, his illustrious blood paid for by Gondomar in Spanish gold, the citizens of Carolina, framing for themselves a free constitution, remembered the man to whose genius they owed their existence as a state. They called the capital of their country

*Raleigh.* The United States can also claim among their muster roll of Founders the no less noble name of Francis Bacon. Will the day come, when, dropping such feeble



SIR WALTER RALEIGH

From the portrait in the first edition of his great folio volume,  
*The History of the World.*

names as Troy and Syracuse, the people of the Great Republic will give the august and immortal name of Bacon to one of their splendid cities?"\*

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See *Personal History of Lord Bacon.*



Sir Walter Raleigh, a distinguished member of the Baconian circle, made the mistake of confiding his private plans for his South American expedition to the king. James promised to keep the secret with his honor, but hastened to whisper it in the ear of Count Gondomar. The Spanish, properly forewarned, had a strong force waiting for Raleigh at the mouth of the Orinoko, and in the fighting that followed, Raleigh's son was killed. James, who was to blame for the whole sorry business, promised Gondomar that Raleigh would be publicly executed, but even the popular account of the knight's death is false. Under such conditions, it would have been madness to preserve the papers of any significant political project. That which was intentionally concealed, even from the records of State, cannot easily be recovered after so long a time. It was an axiom of that day that a wise man was like a trunk with a double bottom—when first opened, the trunk must seem to be empty. Only those of kindred spirit could know that a man's character had a secret compartment.

James Spedding, an outstanding authority on Bacon's life, writes: "We learn incidentally from one of Bacon's apothegyms that soon after he became Lord Keeper (which would be shortly before Raleigh sailed), he had a long conversation with him in Gray's Inn walks. We are not told what the subject was, but it must have been interesting, and was probably important, for it was then that he kept the Earl of Exeter so long waiting upstairs."\*

Benjamin D'Israeli gave some attention to that extraordinary volume, *The History of the World*, which Sir Walter Raleigh is supposed to have written during his confinement in the Tower of London. D'Israeli, whose scholarship equipped him to weigh the difficulties of so vast a

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\*See *The Life and Times of Francis Bacon*.



project, concluded that Raleigh, whose natural inclinations and opportunities belied the work, must have received considerable assistance from other wits. He listed several candidates for the honors of co-authorship, but if D'Israeli stated the dilemma skillfully, his solutions are inconclusive. The only names of interest which he advanced were the Earl of Northumberland and Ben Jonson.\*

Bacon visited Raleigh during his imprisonment, and the friendship between the two men was sufficiently founded upon previous efforts which Bacon had made to cement a genuine alliance between Raleigh and the unfortunate Earl of Essex. Ben Jonson acted as intermediary and agent extraordinary on several occasions. It will be remembered that Jonson was at Stratford on that festive evening which is said to have contributed to the "Bard's" demise. If Shakespeare had small Latin and less Greek, it is unlikely that Raleigh had more Hebrew. The first edition of *The History of the World* is embellished with numerous emblems and devices belonging to the Baconian group. The title page has been a subject of controversy for centuries. Ben Jonson, referring to Sir Walter Raleigh, told Drummond: "The best wits in England were employed in making his history."

Bacon became a member of the Virginia Company in 1609. The charters of that year and of 1612, drafted by Sandys, were prepared for the king's signature by Sir Henry Hobart and Sir Francis Bacon. To Bacon's interest in the colonies, testimony is borne by William Strachey in the dedication (dated 1618) of a manuscript copy of his *Historie of Travaile into Virginia Britania*: "Your Lordship ever approving yourself a most noble fautor (favorer) of the Virginia plantation, being from the beginning (with other lords and earles) of the principal counsell applied

\*See *Curiosities of Literature*.

to propagate and guide yt." One of the reasons why there is so much difficulty in tracing Bacon's activities in connection with the plantation is that the records of the Privy Council to the year 1613 were destroyed by fire at Whitehall, in 1618. Incidentally, the boundaries of the original Virginia Colony extended to the west coast of California.

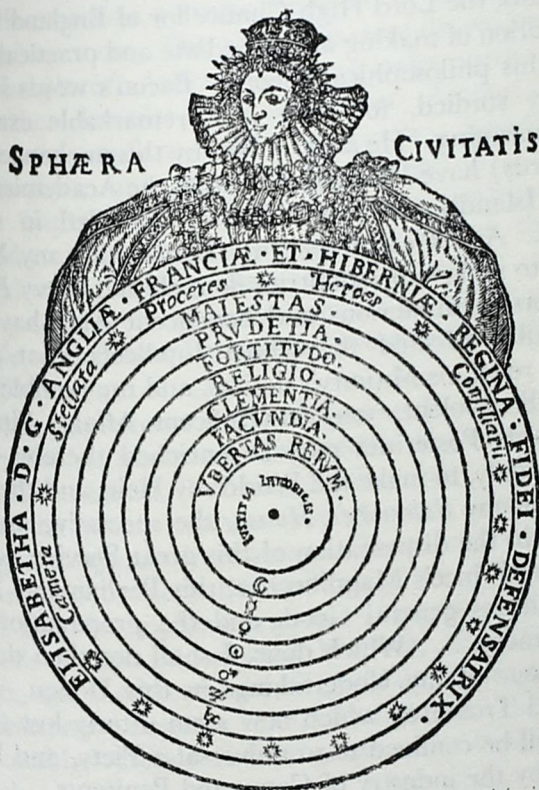
Charles Mills Gayley divides the group instrumental in the foundation of the Virginia Company of London into two sections: the Liberals, or patriots, and the Imperialists, who supported the king in reserving to the Crown the right to form the government of the colonies and plantations. This conflict was the real source of the Revolution of 1775, which resulted in the complete independence of the American colonies. Among the Liberals, Gayley includes Christopher Brooke and John Seldon. "They were both, in their hours of ease, poets after a fashion, members of the pastoral coterie of the Inns of Court, . . . Brooke's bosom friend was the poet Donne. He was also intimate with Shakespeare's fellow dramatists, Jonson and Drayton, and his epic dramatic admirer, Davies of Hereford; . . ."

Gayley shows the usual systematic indifference to Bacon's part in the colonization plan, and the few references which he makes to his Lordship are consistently derogatory. He does, however, mention that Bacon, in his essay *Of Plantation*, which was not published until after the great Chancellor's death, appeared to agree with the practical phase of the Liberals' policy. Gayley says: "Bacon may have collaborated with Sandys, but his interest in the colonies was romantic and always for the glorification of the Crown."

In a speech given at Gray's Inn Hall, an American, the Honorable James Beck, remarked that the two charters of government, which were the beginning of constitutionalism in America and therefore the germ of the Constitution



of the United States, were drawn up by Lord Bacon. He added that Bacon, "the immortal treasurer of Gray's Inn," visioned the future and predicted the growth of America in the memorable words: "This Kingdom now first in His



—From Case's *Sphaera Civitatis*

QUEEN ELIZABETH AS THE PRESIDING GENIUS  
OF THE SPHERE OF MORAL VIRTUES

Majesty's time hath gotten a lot or portion in the New World by the plantation of Virginia and the Summer Islands. And certainly it is with the Kingdom of the Earth



as it is in the Kingdom of Heaven, sometimes a grain of mustard seed proves a great tree.”\*

In a speech touching the recovering of “drowned mineral works,” prepared for the Parliament by the Viscount of St. Albans, the Lord High Chancellor of England indicated his intention of making an immediate and practical application of his philosophical theory. Bacon’s words should be carefully studied, for here is a remarkable example of double meaning. He says: “For, by this unchangeable way (my Lords) have I proposed to erect the Academical Fabric of the Island’s *Salomon’s House*, modelled in my *New Atlantis*. And I can hope (my Lords) that my Midnight Studies to make our Countries flourish and outvy *European* Neighbors in mysterious and beneficent Arts, have not so ingratefully affected the whole Intellects, that you will delay or resist his Majesty’s desires, and my humble Petition in this Benevolent, yea, Magnificent Affair; Since your Honourable Posterities may be enriched thereby, and my Ends are only, to make the World my Heir, and the learned Fathers of my *Salomon’s House*, the successive and sworn Trustees in the dispensation of this great Service, for God’s Glory, my Prince’s Magnificence, this Parliaments Honour, our Countries general Good, and the propagation of my own Memory. . . . Which done, I shall not then doubt the happy Issue of my Undertakings in this Design, whereby concealed Treasures, which now seem utterly lost to Mankind, shall be confined to so universal a Piety, and brought into use by the industry of Converted Penitents. . . .”†

For “Midnight Studies,” works in darkness or secret projects should be read. The “sworn Trustees” were, of course, the members of his esoteric group. The “concealed Treasures” were his discoveries toward truth, and the “Con-

\*See *American Baconiana*, (Feb. 19, 1923).

†*Baconiana, or Certain Genuine Remains of Sr. Francis Bacon*, etc. (London, 1679).

verted Penitents" were those not initiated into the Mysteries, although it is usual to assume that they were convicts exported to work in the plantation.

Until the formation of the Virginia Company, the Jamestown settlement was a tragic example of shortsightedness and mismanagement. The colonizers were drawn principally from the genteel classes and were totally unequipped to carve out their destinies in the wilderness. Among the early arrivals were jewelers and a perfumer. Several were fortune hunters, and all would have come to a bad end had not Captain John Smith been a rough-and-ready soldier, whose exploits included warfare against the Turks in Transylvania. Among these assorted "gentles," however, there were some with capacities suitable for the transference to the Western Hemisphere of the projects designed by the wits of Gray's Inn.

After the Jamestown settlement gained some semblance of order and permanence, descendents of those men who formed the original Baconian Society left England and settled in the colony. It was through them that the Great Plan began to operate in America. There were most fortuitous marriages between the families of the original custodians of the philosophical legacy. From the minglings of the bloods of the Bacons, the Wottons, the Donnes, the Herberts, and the Mores, the Virginia colony derived many of its prominent citizens. Lord Bacon guided the project and probably outlined the program to be followed after his death.

The Reverend M. F. Carey, associate of the Philosophical Society of Great Britain, writes: "We are furnished with no documentary evidence of the introduction of Freemasonry into the United States; but it appears that it had an existence there as early as the year 1606."\* Charles H.

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\*See *Freemasonry in All Ages*.



Merz supports the belief that certain "Masonic" activities must be assigned to the period between 1600 and 1620. He writes: "There is much to indicate that the period of Bacon was the beginning of a secret 'floor work,' an idea that afterwards, imperfectly understood, was welded to the Operative or Guild System and became the curious Anderson and Desaguliers mixture of 1723. . . . Someone must have drawn freely from such works as Utopia, Atlantis, Campanella, Shakespeare, the Bible and other sources for the curious conglomeration of Rosicrucian, Religious, Mystic and Operative laws, rules and government that our ritual presents."\*

The Bacon family itself was well-represented in Virginia, both by name and by blood. It has been usual to trace the Bacons of Virginia from Robert Bacon of Drinkstone, Suffolk, who was the father of the good Sir Nicholas Bacon, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal. Sir Nicholas' brother, James Bacon, had a son, Sir James Bacon, who died in 1618. Sir James was the father of Nathaniel Bacon (the elder), whose grandson was Nathaniel Bacon, the rebel, who led the Bacon Rebellion in Virginia. Nathaniel, the elder, had a brother, the Reverend James Bacon, whose son, also named Nathaniel Bacon, came to Virginia in 1650 and settled at King's Creek in York County. This Nathaniel was a sober and thoughtful man who concerned himself considerably in the affairs of his "uneasy cousin," Nathaniel, the rebel. Both of the Nathaniels have been referred to by historians as Lord Bacon's "kinsmen." The private records do not agree entirely with the accepted genealogy, but this supplies enough material to demonstrate the natural and available channels for the transference of Lord Bacon's projects and remains to Virginia.

Nathaniel, the rebel (1647-1676), graduated at Cam-

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\*See *Guild Masonry in the Making*.



bridge and studied law at the Inns of Court. He married in 1674, and sailed for Virginia the same year. He had ample financial resources, secured several estates, was socially prominent, and was appointed to the Governor's Council. When Governor Berkeley refused to protect the colonists from the neighboring Indian tribes, young Bacon took the field in defiance of the governor's pleasure. A feud approaching revolution resulted, which ended by Nathaniel Bacon and his followers burning the Jamestown settlement. The episode is referred to historically as Bacon's Rebellion, and it has been said that the occurrence played an important part in the formation of the American national consciousness. Bacon's career as a rebel lasted about twenty weeks, and he is supposed to have died of poison or malaria, October 1, 1676, while campaigning. The circumstances of his death are obscure, and his body was buried in an unmarked grave to prevent Governor Berkeley from ordering the corpse to be dug up and publicly hanged. There is more to this story than has ever been told.

Bacon's Rebellion took place exactly one hundred years before the colonies of America declared themselves to be a free and independent nation, in 1776. The causes of the Rebellion and the Revolution were similar, if not identical. In 1676, Bacon, the rebel, said: "But if there be (as sure there is) a just God to appeal to, if religion and justice be a sanctuary here, if to plead the cause of the oppressed, if sincerely to aim at his Majesty's honour, and the public good without any reservation or by-interest, if to stand in the gap after so much blood of our dear brethren bought and sold, if after the loss of a great part of his Majesty's colony deserted and dispeopled freely with our lives and estates to save the remainder, be treason—God Almighty judge and let guilty die."\*

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\*See *Old Virginia and Her Neighbours*, by John Fiske.

Although Bacon, the rebel, was certainly an impetuous young man, his cause was just and his sentiments precisely those of his "noble kinsman." Governor Berkeley represented the same entrenched tyranny against which the Universal Reformation had been fashioned and perfected. In justice, however, it should be noted that Berkeley was summoned to England to explain his conduct. The king refused him audience and is credited with saying: "That old fool has hanged more men in that naked country than I have done for the murder of my father." Berkeley died the following year—of vexation.

As settlements by the Spanish, Dutch, French, and English increased in number and size, no political, philosophical, or mystical sect of Western Europe was without members or sympathizers among the colonizers. Europe was aflame with new ideals affecting every department of human activity. Old World theories became New World practices. Reactionaries and progressives arrived together, but found no substantial reconciliation. Nonconformists continued to be persecuted, and found it necessary to seek refuge in the wilderness or among friendly Indian tribes. Little has been made of these dissensions, and the dissenters themselves have been traditionally regarded as troublesome.

It is difficult to restore the pattern of submerged activities covering a period when historical records were scanty and subject to destruction. It is certain, however, that between 1610 and 1660 a mass of material concerned with the development of the Great Plan for America was transferred from Europe to the Western Continent for preservation and future use. It is shallow thinking to assume that the Secret Societies operating in Europe—the Freemasons, the Rosicrucians, and the Fellows of the Royal Society—had no representation among the colonies until the beginning of the 18th century. The confusion is due, not to the lack



of such activity, but to the inadequacy of available records.

Reverend Edward Patterson, in his *History of Rhode Island* (page 101) refers to a Masonic document found in America which says: "In the spring of 1658, Mordecai Campaunall, Moses Packeckoe, Levi, and others, in all fifteen families, arrived at New Port (America), from Holland. They brought with them the first three degrees of Masonry, and worked them in the house of Campaunall, and continued to do so, they and their successors, to the year 1742."

### *Johannes Kelpius and the Pietists of Pennsylvania*

It has been claimed that the Rosicrucians and possibly other initiate Orders of Europe established themselves in the American Colonies during the closing years of the 17th century. The best publicized candidate for the honor of having brought the Esoteric Schools to the New World was the German theological student and mystical Pietist, Magister Johannes Kelpius. It is believed that Kelpius was initiated into the mysteries of cabalistic philosophy during his university days by the celebrated esotericist, Christian Knorr, Baron von Rosenroth. This learned man edited and translated numerous works relating to obscure subjects, and is especially remembered for his *Kabbala Denudata*. He was a mystic, and published a collection of hymns under the stimulating title *Neuer Helicon Mit Seiner Neun Musen*, etc.

Kelpius lived for some years as an anchorite in a cave in what is now Fairmount Park, Philadelphia, and died in 1708 as the result of exposure and extreme austerities. The direct cause of his death was tuberculosis. John Kelpius came of a substantial family of Siebenburgen. He was educated in the University of Helmstadt, and regarded Dr. Fabricius, professor of theology at Helmstadt, with special



esteem. In a letter addressed to Dr. Fabricius, Kelpius opens with the salutation, "*Your Magnificence.*" On February 7, 1694, Kelpius chartered the ship *Sarah Maria*, of which Captain John Tanner, an Englishman, was the



—From Sache's *The German Pietists of Provincial Pennsylvania*

The only known likeness of the Magister, from the original painting by Dr. Christopher Witt now in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania

master, for the sum of seven pounds, and with his small band of German Pietists began the long and dangerous journey to Pennsylvania. They reached their destination after numerous hardships about ten weeks later.

Kelpius was twenty-three years old when he arrived at Germantown. Finding this bustling community too worldly, the group retired into the depths of the lower Wissahickon woods where they built a hermitage. Here they formed themselves into the "Society of the Woman of the Wilderness," where they consecrated their efforts toward spiritual preparations for the millennium. The brethren became known as the "Hermits of the Ridge," and combined their spiritual ministrations with horoscopy, magic, divination, and healing. Kelpius is credited with laying out the first botanical garden in America. He died sitting in a chair in his garden, surrounded by his sorrowing disciples, in the thirty-fifth year of his life. He was buried in the area, but the location of the grave is not known. His community passed with him, although a few of his celibate followers survived him by many years. Most of the group joined the Mennonite community at Ephrata, and others returned to the simple religious life of the Germantown citizens. The little sect of solitudinarians left little more than a gentle, but eccentric, tradition in the New World.

In the library of the Francke Institutions at Halle, in Saxony, there is a manuscript in the autograph of Pastor Heinrich Muhlenberg which describes the death of Kelpius. Feeling that his end was near, the Magister called in his trusted friend, Daniel Geissler. He handed Geissler a small chest or casket securely sealed, and told him to cast it into the Schuylkill River in a place where the water was deep. Geissler carried the curious box to the river bank and decided to hide it there until after the Magister's death. When he returned to the bedside of the dying Kelpius, the Master raised himself on his elbow and rebuked Geissler for disobeying his instructions and concealing the casket. Geissler, convinced that Kelpius had strange powers of



second sight, went back and threw the small chest into the water. As it fell into the stream, the sealed box exploded, and for some time flashes of lightning and great roaring sounds came out of the river.

Kelpius, writing in 1699, explained the origin and doctrines of his Order. The Pietists were conscientious objectors to the corruptions existing in organized theologies. Their reforms were accompanied by ecstasies, revelations, inspirations, illuminations, inspeakings, prophecies, apparitions, changing of minds, transfigurations, translations of bodies, fastings, paradisiacal representations of voices, melodies, and sensations. It is difficult to conceive that the Rosicrucians, as they were known through their original documents, would lay claim to such procedures.

Pietism, a 17th-century mystical sect, arose modestly in Frankfort as a spiritual revolt against the intellectual orthodoxy of German Protestantism. It spread moderately, and the members gained inspiration and comfort from the mystical teachings of Jakob Boehme. Its principal leaders were Philip Jakob Spener and August Hermann Francke. It was Spener who instituted the famous *Collegia Pietatis*, a kind of meeting of minds for the study of sacred matters. Francke, a Hebrew and Greek scholar, was learned, virtuous, and industrious and much admired in the community where he resided.

The Pietists held many Puritan convictions, indulged millenarian speculations, and dabbled in mystical arts, and their approach to religious matters is said to have most resembled the devotional concepts of the early Franciscans. The principal emphasis was upon religious experience as the direct means of attaining Christian insight. The Moravians are considered a direct offshoot of Pietism, as to a degree was the Methodist revival under John Wesley.



Although the Pietist communities in Pennsylvania were given to mystical speculation, even to a little cabalism and folk magic, few genuine Rosicrucian landmarks have been discovered among their remains. They were religious enthusiasts, and the inner circle was so devout in its practice of continence that it became extinct within fifty years. Magister Kelpius seems to have studied astrology and the metaphysics of Jakob Boehme, and relics relating to these subjects are scattered about the valley of Ephrata. Some of the Pietists gave thought to alchemy, attempted the calculation of the millennium, located water with the divining rod, and wore magical amulets and talismans. They were Second Adventists, and a few believed that they would be translated bodily into the spiritual world without suffering physical death.

Dr. Julius Friedrich Sachse was the principal historian of the Germantown communities which flourished in and about Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, during the 18th and early 19th centuries. In his books, *The German Pietists of Provincial Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1895) and *The Diarium of Magister Johannes Kelpius* (Lancaster, 1917), he attempted to prove that the Kelpius brethren were Rosicrucians. As the original Pietists never claimed such an association, Dr. Sachse based his conclusions upon circumstantial evidence. He advanced seals, signets, ornate symbolic crosses, fragments of mystical rituals, and certain books and manuscripts discovered in the area to support his opinions. These relics, though indicating a devotion to metaphysical speculation, are not sufficiently Rosicrucian in themselves to justify their acceptance as prima-facie evidence.

Some of these religious curiosities may be authentic productions of the Society or its members, but until it is determined how and when they were brought to the New World and by what authority it is unwise to jump to conclusions.

Many of the immigrants brought with them all of their worldly goods, and we cannot assume that a man belonged to a Secret Society merely because one or two books dealing with the Society, and available to anyone, were found among his effects.

Through the courtesy of the daughter of the late Dr. Sachse, it has been possible to examine the Rosicrucian manuscript formerly belonging to him and some other German mystical books which he regarded as indicating Rosicrucian influence. Zimmerman, the astronomer who predicted the end of the world in 1694, was a close friend of Kelpius. Certainly the prophecy was a failure, and it scarcely seems reasonable that the Rosicrucian Brotherhood should move to Pennsylvania, via the good ship *Sarah Maria*, and there organize themselves out of existence by the extremeness of their vows and religious obligations.

On the other hand, it is quite possible that Kelpius was a member of one of the semisecret Adventist movements which had strong followings in Germany and the Low Countries. His manner of life indicates that he was bound by religious obligations, and bound others to himself and the cause which he represented by similar vows. He did not, however, fulfill the requirements set forth in the Manifestoes of the Rosy Cross, which insisted that members of the Society remain inconspicuous by refraining from any public practices that might draw attention to themselves.

Because almost nothing is actually known about the mystical convictions of the Kelpians, their part in the transference of esoteric lore from Europe to America has been considerably exaggerated. There is nothing whatever to prove that as a sect they were more than they appeared to be, and they laid down most impermanent footings. Individual members probably were acquainted with the reformation projected by Secret Societies on the Continent



and in England, but these signs and portents were interpreted as foreshadowing the approaching millennium. The Pietists could scarcely have been devoted Second Adventists had they any vision of an extensive program for the building of a new social order in the Western Hemisphere, nor did their activities imply any plan for the future or any program for the expansion of the philosophical or mystical aspects of their belief. There is not even the suggestion that Kelpius selected a successor or had any intention of transferring any authority, spiritual or temporal.

Among the unusual religious groups that settled in Pennsylvania were the Mennonites, the Labadists, the Dunkers, the Neu-geborenen, the Schwenkfelders, and the Moravian brethren. Most of these sects held convictions that could be interpreted as mystical. In all probability, however, the Rosicrucian descent was established considerably earlier by the English colonials of Virginia. The mystics of the Wissahickon, according to the actual words of Kelpius, shared the convictions and perpetuated the doctrines of the Quietists and Chiliasts, who struggled for existence among the Protestant communities of Germany and Switzerland.

The Pietists were channels through which books on cabalism, alchemy, astrology, and the Hermetic arts reached the New World. Thus, they contributed to the westward motion of the Philosophic Empire. Their own practices, however, detracted seriously from their usefulness as reformers or educators, and their influence was limited to the neighborhood wherein they dwelt. Kelpius was a devout man, possibly well-learned, but most of his followers were more earnest than informed, and there seems to have been no vision among them of a broad or enduring ministry. This Order of the Mustard Seed never fulfilled the promise of the parable. It not only failed to increase, but also perished in the foreign soil.



*The American Revolutionary Period*

No study of the descent of the adept tradition through the Baconian group would be complete without reference to *The Life and Adventures of Common Sense*, which was published in 1769 and was described as "an Historical Allegory." The work appeared anonymously, but is attributed on slight evidence to Herbert Lawrence, a surgeon and apothecary and an intimate friend of David Garrick. This book was the first to attribute the authorship of the Shakespeare plays to Sir Francis Bacon, but that reference, while the best known, is not by any means the most important fragment of the text. Bacon seems to appear personified under the pseudonym "Wisdom." His lordship's departure to Holland is specifically mentioned, and the descent of the Great Plan is traced allegorically from the schools of Greek philosophy through the medieval world to the rise of the Medici, and the account terminates with the crowning of George III as King of England.

Beginning on page 224 is the following stimulating remark: "It was a few Summers ago, that GENIUS, HUMOUR and myself took this same Magistrate along with us to pass some Days at the Foot of a certain Hill called *Parnassas*, where we have a small Habitation, which we hold of the Ladies of the Manor, who are nine maiden Sisters." It would be difficult to ignore this obvious reference to the Lodge of the Nine Sisters and all that it implies.

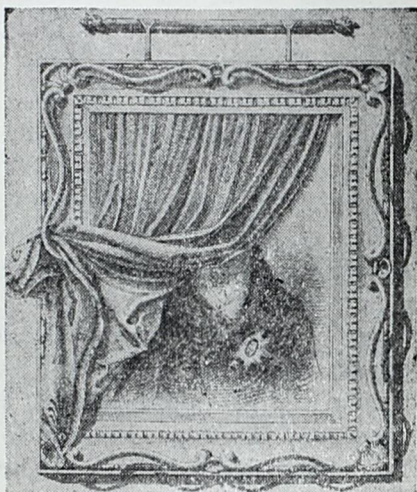
On page 237 of Volume II is a veiled reference to relevant matters: "The Royal Club or Society (as it is called) founded by *Charles* Second, was, at first, filled with Men of real Science and Learning. WISDOM was an original Member, but of late Years he went so seldom amongst them, that they thought proper to expel him for non attendance. After the Expulsion of WISDOM,

GENIUS was desirous of being chosen into this Society; and that he might not be rejected on Account of his peculiar Abilities, he was introduced to them as a grave Antiquary who had great Knowledge in Coins, Fossils and Cockle-shells." Obviously, *genius* in this case represents Elias Ashmole, Esquire, who was the most distinguished antiquary of his time, a world-famous collector of coins, and an accumulator of fossils, shells, and other geological curiosia. *Wisdom*, of course, was Bacon, who originated the entire project of the Royal Society.

Between January 21, 1769 and January 21, 1772, an unknown man using the pseudonym of Junius wrote as a man personally outraged. The sins of Parliament weighed heavily upon his soul. He spoke for England, for the American colonies, and for the world. He defended the freedom of the press, attacked taxation without representation, and was a vigorous and belligerent champion of human rights. There can be no doubt that his pen advanced the cause of the American Revolution and created sympathy for the victims of bungling English politicians. It is not remarkable that *The Letters of Junius* gave inspiration and comfort to the cause of American independence. They were widely read in the colonies, and the solid judgment which these *Letters* contained influenced the thinking of Franklin, Jefferson, and Hancock. "Both liberty and property are precarious," writes Junius, "unless the possessors have sense and spirit enough to defend them. This is not the language of vanity. If I am a vain man, my gratification lies within a narrow circle. I am the sole depository of my own secret, and it shall perish with me."

Roderick Eagle contributed a curious observation concerning a possible association between Junius and the Baconian group. Eagle wrote that the first person so far recorded to name Bacon as the author of the Shakespeare

plays was the Reverend James Wilmot, D.D. (1726-1808), who was rector of Barton-on-the-Heath, in Warwickshire, in 1785. This sober scholar of Trinity, Oxford, never married, and devoted his life to quiet scholarship. A short biography by him was published by his niece. She made no reference to his Shakespearean-Baconian interest, but did attribute to him *The Letters of Junius*. Eagle doubted



THE TRUE PORTRAIT OF AN  
UNKNOWN MAN

From an engraved title page of an early  
edition of *The Letters of Junius*

that Dr. Wilmot was sufficiently close to the political situation of his time—he ministered in a remote hamlet—to have written the celebrated *Letters*, but suggested that he may have been a literary accomplice who transcribed the original to throw inquisitive persons, especially handwriting experts, into further confusion. Eagle adds: “I have an old engraving showing ‘Junius’ dressed as a clergyman.



He is writing on a sheet of paper which bears the heading 'to the King'. On either side of him sit two men, one of whom is dictating. Under these portraits have been written 'Lord George Sackville' and 'Lord Chatham'." The same author suspected that Dr. Wilmot was the author of the book, *The Story of the Learned Pig*, published anonymously in London in 1786. Only one copy of this little book concerned with the transmigrations of a highly talented hog has been discovered. In one of its incarnations, the hog claimed to have written the plays attributed to Shakespeare. The editor of the pig's narrative signed himself "Transmigratus."\*

Early editions of *The Letters of Junius* are ornamented with curious vignettes which may be described as landmarks of a French Secret Society. The first edition of certain of Voltaire's writings are similarly adorned. Dr. Wilmot would have been forty-three years old when the elusive Lawrence published his *Common Sense*. Here again, two men, both obscure and contemporary, nourished the same and most singular opinions. It is reported that Dr. Wilmot burned all of his research material without having published any of his findings! The 18th century was less suitable for the perpetuation of secret enterprises than were the 16th and 17th centuries. The cases of Junius, Lawrence, and Transmigratus proved, however, that it was possible to conceal an identity with the assistance of the proper persons. Even during the American Revolutionary period the public mind was inclined to ignore the mysterious and to accept appearance without question. Most historians have merely perpetuated popular traditions and have sought no reasonable explanation for extraordinary events.

Freemasonry of the 18th century cannot be estimated in terms of the modern Order. Masonic scholars were still

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\*See *Shakespeare, New Views for Old*.

dabbling in the systems of ancient Mysteries which dominated classical antiquity. The esoteric side of the rites and symbols was impressive to scholarly minds, and the Masons regarded themselves as the responsible custodians of a vast project dedicated by earlier adepts to the emancipation of humanity from ignorance and tyranny. The obligations of the Mason became his principal allegiances. There was growing resentment in the colonies against the English Crown, and the local administration offended the thoughtful. Dedication to principles gained importance where there were few causes worth supporting. Masonry also successfully bridged many religious differences and discords. The Brethren could practice Christian principles without emphasizing theological differences, thus supplying a spiritual horizon necessary to offset the conflict of sects.

The second half of the 18th century was marked by broad but discreet circulation of philosophical knowledge. What Bacon had called "experiments of light" and "experiments of comfort" gained fashionable support. The sentiments of the French people were appropriately touched when Dr. Benjamin Franklin and Voltaire embraced each other with fraternal tenderness on the floor of the Lodge of the Nine Sisters. It was only natural that under Franklin's guidance this Lodge should have enlarged its scope to become a veritable university of world political philosophy.

The Lodge of the Nine Sisters, guided by the impressive scholarship of Court de Gebelin, was the most philosophical, mystical, and esoteric of the French Lodges. Its membership included such extremes as Prince Charles de Rohan and Monsieur Danton. Lafayette was, of course, involved, and in 1785 the Marquis also joined the Egyptian Masonry of Cagliostro and proclaimed his absolute confidence in the Grand Cophte. When Anton Mesmer arrived from Vienna



with his theories of animal magnetism, Lafayette was one of his first customers.\*

Speaking of John Paul Jones, the American naval hero, Gerald W. Johnson notes: "As he was a Mason, the famous Lodge of the Nine Sisters, which counted among its membership Voltaire, Helvetius the philosopher, and Houdon the sculptor, invited him to attend to be eulogized."† Jean Antoine Houdon has been described as "affected by the romantic frenzy of the times." His artistic accomplishments included portraits of George Washington and the Count di Cagliostro.

Dr. Benjamin Franklin was not only a devout Quaker, but also a most astute diplomat. Among Franklin's outstanding virtues was discretion, a quality indispensable to statesmen. It is extremely difficult to trace Franklin's associations with Secret Societies, although such are known to have existed. In his extensive *Autobiography*, there is not even mention of his membership in a Masonic Order, although he was active in the Fraternity, and published an edition of Anderson's *Constitutions*. During his travels in England and on the Continent, Franklin contacted many prominent liberals and was received by them with marks of esteem and fraternity. He was present in the Lodge of the Nine Sisters during the elaborate memorial services for Voltaire. At the time of the peace negotiations in France, the Doctor was attended by Lafayette.

The details of Franklin's Masonic connections have been drawn largely from contemporary correspondence. He was duly elected Master of the Masons of Philadelphia, and was regarded as the first Grand Master of Pennsylvania, possibly by authority derived from the Grand Lodge at London. The esteemed doctor was much given to secret

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\*See *Revolution and Freemasonry*, by Bernard Fay.

†See *The First Captain*.



assemblies. He contemplated the formation of a club to be called The Society of the Free and Easy, which was to be devoted to moral and ethical instructions for those who intended later to associate themselves with Freemasonry. With several young men, he was active in organizing a group called the *Junto*. The rules governing this Society were later incorporated into the Philosophical Society of Philadelphia. Those aware of Franklin's connections with Secret Fraternities will find the following quotation of interest: "There seems to me at present to be a great occasion for raising a *United Party for Virtue*, by forming the virtuous and good men of all nations into a regular body, to be governed by suitable, good, and wise rules, which good and wise men may probably be more unanimous in their obedience to, than common people are to common laws. I at present think, that whoever attempts this aright, and is well qualified, cannot fail of pleasing God, and of meeting with success."

Mutual interests in *curiosa* and antiquities is said to have inspired the friendship between Franklin and Sir Hans Sloane, President of the Royal Society. Franklin also knew Sir William Herschel, and was popular in England in spite of the Revolutionary War. George III consoled himself over the loss of the American colonies because Herschel had recently named a planet in his honor. Franklin was acquainted with Mesmer and Cagliostro, but there is no evidence that he ever met Rousseau. This celebrated French philosopher was living in strict retirement, but he received a copy of Franklin's liturgy for a new religion, with pleasure. Franklin, equally polite, commended the influence of Rousseau's philosophy not only upon the European mind, but also among the American colonies.

Franklin was in contact with certain obscure gentlemen in the colonies, who took no obvious action in the forma-

tion of the American government, but were secretly advancing the cause. The Philadelphia printer acted as confidential agent for this group on numerous occasions. He traveled about visiting here and there, and delivered messages and reports to interested parties. He was close to the ear of Thomas Jefferson whose attainments were also highly diversified. It is regrettable that most of Jefferson's library and papers were destroyed when the British army sacked Washington in the War of 1812. Franklin was a link between the European Secret Societies and the American democratic experiment. The following incident is indicative of this association.

Robert Allen Campbell, in his curious and rare work, *Our Flag*, described a meeting which took place in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in the fall of 1775. A committee had been appointed to consider a design for a colonial flag. The committeemen were entertained in the home of a patriotic citizen. At that time, a gentleman, whose name was not once mentioned in the reports of the meeting, but was always referred to as "the Professor," was a guest in the house. He later shared his apartment with Dr. Franklin. The Professor was apparently in the prime of life, but referred casually to historical events of the previous century as though he had been present at the time. He carried with him an iron-bound chest filled with rare books and ancient manuscripts. It was noted as remarkable that he was a vegetarian.

The Professor was introduced to the committeemen, Messrs. Lynch and Harrison and General Washington, as the group assembled for dinner. When Dr. Franklin was presented, the Professor was especially cordial, and as they shook hands there was "an instantaneous, a very apparent and a mutually gratified recognition." The Professor dominated the meeting, and his recommendations for the



colonial flag were immediately accepted. There can be no doubt from his words that he was associated with Esoteric Societies. Later, on the evening of December 13, 1775, Dr. Franklin, General Washington, and the Professor "spent most of the night in earnest comparison concerning the momentous question in which they each and all had such vital interest." On this occasion the unknown gentle-



—From Hayden's *Washington and his Masonic Compeers*

GEORGE WASHINGTON, AT THE AGE OF SIXTY-FOUR YEARS, WEARING MASONIC SASH AND APRON AND THE COLLAR AND JEWEL OF PAST MASTER OF HIS LODGE.

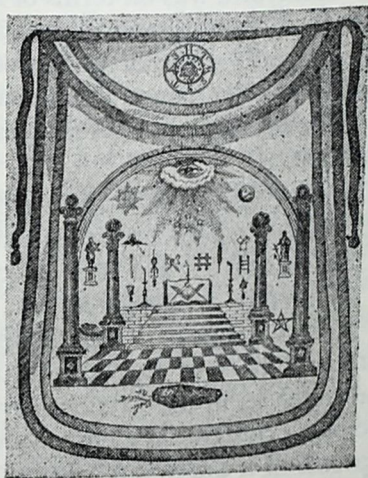
Painted from life.

man predicted that the new American nation would soon take its place among the recognized governments of the world. The identity of the Professor was never discovered, and there were no further references to him.

There is no documentary evidence known to be in existence regarding the initiation of General Lafayette or the



Lodge in which he was raised. This uncertainty led the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania to appoint a committee in 1824 to verify the facts. The investigation satisfied the committee that Brother General Marie Jean Paul Joseph Roche Yves Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de Lafayette, was a Mason in good standing, and he was enrolled as an honorary member of the R. W. Grand Lodge F. & A. M.



—From Hayden's *Washington and his Masonic Compeers*

WASHINGTON'S MASONIC APRON, EMBROIDERED  
ON WHITE SATIN BY MADAME LAFAYETTE, AND  
PRESENTED IN 1784.

of Pennsylvania. The Marquis revisited America in 1784, called upon General Washington at Mt. Vernon, and on this occasion presented Washington with a beautiful white satin apron, elaborately embroidered with Masonic emblems in red, white, and blue, the handiwork of Madame, the Marquise de Lafayette. Washington wore this apron when he was present at the Masonic ceremony on the

occasion of the laying of the cornerstone of the District of Columbia.\*

In 1782, on June 24, Lafayette was received into the *Loge du Contrat Social* in Paris, with the honors properly rendered the Masons of the higher grade. The register containing this report covered the period of 1775-89, and included such signatures as La Rochefoucauld, Rousseau, and St.-Germain. Lafayette was on terms of some intimacy with the Comte de St.-Germain, and while the Comte considered the young Marquis a rather impetuous youth, they were of one mind on larger issues. Lafayette is a direct link between the political societies of France and the young American government.

In *The Theosophist* (Madras, October 1883) the editor, probably H. P. Blavatsky, commented on an article, "Adepts and Politics." She writes: "Yet it is as certain though this conviction is merely a *personal* one, that several Brothers of the Rosy Cross—or 'Rosicrucians,' so-called—did take a prominent part in the American struggle for independence, as much as in the French Revolution during the whole of the past century. We have documents to that effect, and the proofs of it are in our possession . . . it is our firm conviction based on historical evidence and direct inferences from many of the *Memoirs* of those days that the French Revolution is due to *one* Adept. It is that mysterious personage, now conveniently classed with other 'historical charlatans' (i. e. great men whose occult knowledge and powers shoot over the heads of the imbecile majority), namely, the Count de St.-Germain—who brought about the just outbreak among the paupers, and put an end to the selfish tyranny of the French kings—the 'elect, and the Lord's anointed.' And we know also that among

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\*See *Washington and his Masonic Compeers*, by Sidney Hayden, for details of Washington's Masonic association and activities.



the *Carbonari*—the precursors and pioneers of Garibaldi there was more than one *Freemason* deeply versed in occult sciences and Rosicrucianism.”

Anderson's *Constitution of Freemasonry* was published exactly one hundred years after the appearance of the great Shakespearean folio in 1623. In 1730, Daniel Coxe, of New Jersey, was appointed Provincial Grand Master of the provinces of New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania by his Grace, Thomas, Duke of Norfolk, Grand Master of the Premiere Grand Lodge of England. Benjamin Franklin became a Mason in 1731, and was Provisional Grand Master of Pennsylvania in 1734. George Washington took his first degree in the Lodge at Fredericksburg, Virginia, in 1752. The early American Lodges met in taverns or inns, and the first Masonic Temple in America was built in Boston in 1832. It cannot be learned that Thomas Paine was a Mason, although he wrote an essay dealing with the origin of Freemasonry. He attempted to trace the Fraternity to the Celtic Druids. Of Masonry, George Washington wrote in 1791: “Being persuaded a just application of the principles on which Free Masonry is founded, must be promotive of virtue and public prosperity, I shall always be glad to advance the interests of this Society and be considered by them a deserving brother.”\*

It is believed that the Boston Tea Party was arranged around a chowder supper at the home of the Bradlee brothers, who were Masons, and that mother Bradlee kept the water hot so that they could wash off the disguises. “Who were these ‘Mohawks,’ Sons of Liberty, in paint and gear?” asks Madison C. Peters. “Free Masons, members of St. Andrews Lodge, led by the Junior Warden, Paul Revere.”†

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\*Given in writing to the officers of St. Andrew's Lodge at Newport, Rhode Island.

†See *The Masons, Makers of America*.



As the relations between the colonies became more strained, it was inevitable that the Lodge rooms should become council chambers, where, protected by obligations of secrecy, men could freely discuss matters which could not publicly be propagated. Here, also, they could learn that they had staunch supporting brethren in England and on the Continent. Freemasons among the leaders in the American cause against England included Putnam, Montgomery, Wayne, Sullivan, Revere, Lafayette, Kosciuszko, Baron de Kalb, and Count Polaski. Robert Morris is also mentioned. The Grand Master of the Masonic Lodges of France at that time was the Duke of Chartres, and the Duchess was the leader of the adoptive Lodge of women Freemasons. The head of another feminine Lodge was Madame Helvetius, Franklin's friend and hostess. The women's Lodge supplied John Paul Jones with funds for a ship. His famous vessel *Bon Homme Richard* was named in honor of Benjamin Franklin, in whose *Poor Richard's Almanac* Jones had read the maxim: "If you would have your business done, go yourself; if not, send."

The first Continental Congress, on the motion of George Washington, selected Peyton Randolph, Past Grand Master of Masons of Virginia to preside over its deliberations. Later, John Hancock, another Mason, succeeded him. It was Hancock who signed the Declaration of Independence with a signature so bold that "the King of England could read it without spectacles." It is believed that Thomas Jefferson became a Mason in France. Of the fifty-six signers of the Declaration of Independence, nearly fifty were Masons. Only one is known with certainty not to have been a member of the Order.

At Bunker Hill, on June 17, 1775, fell General Joseph Warren, Grand Master of the Massachusetts Grand Lodge. There is a report unverified that George Washington per-

sonally made Lafayette a Mason in military Lodge No. 19, at Morristown, New Jersey.

Frederick Wilhelm August Heinrich Ferdinand, Baron von Steuben, who received the first offer of surrender from Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown, was made a Mason in New York State. He had been aide-de-camp to the King of Prussia. Other Masonic leaders included General Nathaniel Green and Major General Henry Knox. All but two of Washington's Brigadier Generals were Masons, as was Ethan Allen of Green Mountain-boy fame. Of the fifty-five members of the Constitutional Convention, all but five were Masons.

### *The Latin American Patriots*

The early colonization of the Latin American countries was dominated by the Spaniards, and the several colonies which they had established were governed by Spanish vice-roys until the rise of the liberators. It is therefore useful to examine the condition of Secret Societies in Spain during the era of the conquest and the centuries which followed. The fate of Spain and the rapid decline of the power of that country was strongly influenced by the Inquisition. The Inquisition was established in Spain in 1233, but its original sphere of influence was largely confined to the kingdom of Aragon. Ferdinand and Isabella, remembered for their participation in the financing of Columbus, were directly responsible for the promotion of the Inquisitional program. About 1481, the queen brought the Inquisition to Castile, and two years later the notorious Torquemada was named Grand Inquisitor of Spain. For the eighteen years he filled this office, Torquemada averaged ten thousand executions annually.

While some of the victims of the Holy Office were sacrificed to the political ambitions of powerful families,



the majority was accused of heresy. This convenient term seems to have been applied generously to those intellectuals whose mental horizons had been broadened by the educational institutions which flourished under the Moors. The heretics were the liberals, the progressives, and such as favored the rights of man. The secret association of spies, fanatics, and informers which served the Inquisitional Court were the agents of a determined effort to destroy the philosophers, scholars, and mystics who refused to be converted to the prevailing concept of salvation. The zeal and thoroughness of the Inquisitors implied that heretical tendencies were strong and that the Church was in a fair way to lose its control over the Spanish conscience. There was an abortive revolution against Charles V in 1520, when he attempted to limit the traditional liberties of his people. The Secret Society which was then led by Padilla was suppressed, but not destroyed. It reappeared in 1821 as the *Comuneros* (the Confederation of the Communists), a group dedicated to the overthrow of the Spanish monarchy. As this revival coincides closely with the revolutionary outbreaks among the Spanish colonials in America, more than a coincidence may be expected.

In 1726, the Grand Lodge of England granted a patent for the establishment of a Masonic Lodge at Gibraltar, and another was founded the following year at Madrid. The Inquisition, which still exercised considerable power, persecuted the Orders so diligently that the Spanish Masons were forced to adopt an elaborate program of secrecy. The Lodges, however, found temporary liberty and considerable opportunity for political activity during the confusion caused by the Napoleonic Wars. Masonry was later again suppressed by Ferdinand VII, so that such Lodges as continued to function concealed their activities under other names. The Grand Orient of Madrid was in secret corre-



spondence with those French Lodges which were taking so large a part in the conditioning of the people of France. The Zoroastrian Rite attracted prominent members of the Spanish military, and it was always expedient to have friends in the army.

The Brazilian Emperor, Dom Pedro I, was elected Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Brazil in 1825. Heckethorn notes that the turbulent Republics of South America all had their Masonic Lodges, which were in many cases political clubs in disguise. The Grand Lodge of Mexico was instituted in 1825, but there was Masonic activity in that country prior to that date. The Masonic conviction of liberty, equality, and fraternity must have been attractive to progressive Catholics, for even priests associated themselves with the Lodges. Many prominent Latin Americans of the period of the revolution were educated in Europe or were in contact with enthusiasts returning to their homeland indoctrinated with the means and ends of the French Revolutionists.

With Secret Societies intensely active in Spain and Portugal, many royalists, though faithful children of the Church, privately associated themselves with concepts of liberalism which excited the imagination and appealed to the instinct of the adventurous. This drift of esoteric traditions from Spain was openly acknowledged during the Napoleonic Era, and, though later suppressed in the larger centers of population, continued to inflame afflicted classes in the Spanish colonies. Historical references, however, are meager due to the Inquisition, and even the heroes were reluctant to commit themselves to membership in organizations regarded as highly subversive by the Holy Office.

Nor should the secret traditions which lingered among the Indian tribes of the several regions be overlooked. The mystical and philosophical overtones of the European

groups were in broad agreement with the occult religious teachings of the pre-Columbian priesthoods. Through a mingling of aspirations and convictions, the Creoles, mestizos, and Indians found not only a common ground, but were also inspired to a program of mutual support, protection, and, if necessary, concealment. These factors, though of slight interest to the literal historian, have fascination for the political psychologist. There are persistent reports that the Secret Societies of the Aztecs, Mayas, and Incas continued long after the conquest, guarded by those reticent aborigines who refused to renounce their ancient cultural institutions.

Although it may be difficult to trace the rumors, there are elusive reports identifying most of the political reformers of the Latin American countries with the Fraternities and Societies of the Indian tribes. Benito Juarez was suspected of such affiliations, and the followers of Pancho Villa were outspoken on this subject. There are vast areas still comparatively unexplored south of the Rio Grande. The primitive religions are powerful in these regions; and wherever the old faiths survive, the esoteric doctrine is served and protected and the occult arts are cultivated.

### *Simon Bolivar*

In the case of Simon Bolivar (1783-1830) is exemplified the effect of direct contact with the European Secret Societies. From his political prophecies, it is evident that Bolivar was not only a brilliant statesman, but also an intellectual liberal. He read extensively, and his favorite authors were Rousseau, Montesquieu, Hobbes, Helvetius, Holbach, Hume, and Spinoza. A man so naturally emotional, so strongly inclined toward mysticism, and at the same time so moved and dominated by internal pressures would naturally turn to philosophy for inspiration, guid-



ance, and comfort. Though a devout Catholic, he was one of those Latin American heroes who refused to accept the reactionary tendencies of his Church.

Bolivar witnessed the coronation of Napoleon, but was less impressed by the imperial crown than by the tremendous personal influence which Bonaparte exercised over his followers. While in France and Italy, the Liberator contacted the various groups that were working quietly but relentlessly to accomplish the freedom of the human mind. The democratic ideology converted him completely, as is proved by his vow at Rome. On the occasion, Bolivar and his tutor, Simon Rodriguez, stood on the summit of the holy hill. Suddenly the young man fell on his knees and addressing Rodriguez, cried out: "I swear before you, I swear by the God of my forefathers, I swear by my forefathers, I swear by my native country, that I shall never allow my hands to be idle nor my soul to rest until I have broken the shackles which chain us to Spain."

It was during his European travel that Bolivar joined the Masonic Order. Michael Vaucaire dramatizes the Masonic associations of the young man by an episode which occurred while Bolivar was in his stateroom at sea: "Bolivar came across his Freemason's diploma. He unrolled the great printed sheet, which showed a curtain hanging in an antique temple. It bore the different symbols, level, trowel, square, compass, the three points and the mallet, also crouching sphinxes. Bolivar recalled his introduction to the Lodge at Cadiz, whither he had been drawn by curiosity rather than conviction. He had taken oath to accept no legitimate government in his country save one elected by the full vote of the people, and, to strive with all his might to establish a republican system."\* Later, in Paris, Bolivar was raised to Master in the Lodge of the Nine Sisters.

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\*See *Bolivar, the Liberator*.



There is a noble monument in the principal square of Caracas, his birthplace, which carries the bold words: "Simon Bolivar, Liberator of Venezuela, New Granada, Ecuador and Peru, and Founder of Bolivia." The United States viewed with deep sympathy the struggles of the Latin American countries. The stepson of George Washington sent to Bolivar, through Brother Lafayette, a miniature and



GENERAL SIMON BOLIVAR

medallion including a lock of Washington's hair as a token of esteem. But if General Bolivar enjoyed the sympathy of those who loved freedom, he also suffered deeply and cruelly for his convictions, like most who have served unselfishly to liberate their fellow men. He died a tired, broken old man at the age of forty-seven, as Ybarra writes: "... in exile, under an alien roof, clad in a borrowed night-shirt."\*

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\*See *Bolivar, the Passionate Warrior*.

The vision which the Liberator left to his people can be estimated from a few quotations: "America," said Bolivar in 1823, "is not a problem; neither is it a fact. It is the highest and most irrefutable assignment of destiny." In a document dated 1829, the Liberator wrote: "I have achieved no other good than independence. That was my mission. The nations I have founded will, after prolonged and bitter agony, go into an eclipse, but will later emerge as states of the one great republic, AMERICA."\*

### *Miguel Hidalgo*

The career of Hidalgo (1753-1811) emphasizes the prominence of certain political clubs built around liberal principles imported from the Secret Societies of Spain and the rise of local organizations to advance the cause of social justice in Mexico.

Under various protective pseudonyms, such as Protective Clubs, Literary Circles, and Social Enterprises, the spirit of liberty extended its sphere of influence from the European Lodges of liberation to the valley of Mexico. The Masonic memberships of certain key-figures involved in the Mexican struggle for independence should not be accepted as proof that these men were directly associated with esoteric organizations. The condition of Freemasonry at the time, however, and its place in the descent of the Great Plan for liberty, equality, and fraternity constitutes a tangible link between the Secret Schools of the ancient world with their moral and ethical convictions and the cause of human enlightenment which was so strongly championed by the great Mexican patriot.

The patronymic name Hidalgo (*hijo de algo*, which means *son of somebody*) infers a degree of aristocracy or

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\*Quoted from *Simon Bolivar*, by Gerard Masur.



minor nobility. Miguel Hidalgo, called the Father of Mexican independence, was ordained to the priesthood in 1778, and from that time on was in frequent difficulties with his religious superiors. Though of slight stature and humble appearance, Hidalgo had improved his years at the Royal and Pontifical University of Mexico. He early showed an inclination for history and political science. Even as a young man, he dedicated his life to the emancipation of the Mexican people, especially the Indians. He favored the writings of the French rationalists, particularly the theories of Rousseau and Voltaire, as these applied to the rights of man. He was denounced to the Inquisition at Valladolid for unorthodoxy. He was accused of reading prohibited books and of favoring Jansenism. It was particularly pointed out that he carried with him in his wanderings a copy of the Koran.

Concerning the researches of the Inquisition, Arthur Howard Noll writes: "In the meantime the Holy Office had pursued an investigation by its usual methods, and had discovered that Hidalgo was developing revolutionary tendencies; that he was accustomed to speak of monarchs as tyrants, and that he cherished aspirations for political liberty. He had little respect for the *Index Expurgatorius*, and was so extensively read in current French literature that he had become thoroughly imbued with French ideas, or, as it was subsequently called, he was *afrancesado*. He had, by the direct evidence of thirteen witnesses sighted before the tribunal, been guilty of heretical utterances, sufficient to consign him to the stake."\*

The officers of the Inquisition, however, admitted that there were some doubts on certain points, and to the amazement of Hidalgo himself the case against him was suspended and the evidence filed for future reference. It was referred

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\*See *The Life and Times of Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla*.



to in due time. The principal heresy concerned Hidalgo's program for the economic and social improvement of the Indians and mestizos. He was ultimately deprived of his benefice, and by his forty-seventh year was completely dedicated to the liberation of his people from foreign tyranny and domestic oppression.

Of special interest was the sudden development throughout the provinces of what were called social and literary clubs. These sprang up rapidly, but no satisfactory history of their origin or the persons responsible for the idea are available. In some way, these groups eluded the Holy Office, and from their inception were dedicated to the same ends that dominated similar Secret Societies in Europe. In 1808, Hidalgo joined one of these clubs in Queretaro, immediately became its principal leader, and extended his influence through this chain of available organizations. This circumstance probably explains the well-authenticated report that Hidalgo became a member of a Masonic Fraternity in middle life despite the edicts of the Vatican. Gould, in his *Military Lodges*, stated positively that Jose Maria Morelos, another priest devoted to the cause of Hidalgo, was a Mason. He was also executed as an "unconfessed heretic." It was in one of these clubs that Hidalgo met Ignacio Allende, who later became the military genius of the revolution. The appearance of a network of Societies dedicated to the private conviction of political liberty may well witness a contact between European groups and the New World. Conditions in Spain were such as to justify a discreet program of organizations in Mexico.

Hidalgo's revolution was short-lived and his career as a leader of rebellion lasted only one year. Allende was executed on the 26th of June 1811. Hidalgo was first degraded by the ecclesiastical court and then turned over to the civil courts. He suffered the *auto-da-fe*, and on the

30th of July 1811, received a military execution. He met death heroically, and his last words were a prayer that heaven would favor the independence of his people. Although Hidalgo's name is revered throughout Mexico, little has been written about him which is available to his countrymen. The details of his career probably have been considered inflammatory and contrary to the present interests of the Church and State.

### *Benito Pablo Juarez*

On the 21st of March, in a little Zapotecan Indian village of some twenty families, was born Benito Juarez (1806-1872), the emancipator of Mexico. He had no memory of his parents who died during his infancy, but, after numerous difficulties, succeeded in educating himself in law and became deeply involved in the political problems of his country. The policies of Juarez were brought to the attention of the United States by the London correspondent of the *New York Tribune*, an international exile by the name of Karl Marx. Juarez has been described as an agnostic, but a careful consideration of his attitudes reveals, not a rebellion against God but against the theological institutions which burdened the people of Mexico. This silent, inscrutable Indian belonged to a race moved inwardly by powerful convictions, but outwardly impassive. His God was the Father of Freedom, served by a priesthood of liberators.

Juarez became a Mason in his youth. After the overthrow of the Maximilian Empire, Mexican Freemasonry was consolidated in 1868, Benito Juarez being one of its highest officials. *Mackey's History of Freemasonry* contains the following note: "It would seem as if the authority of Juarez alone held these Rites together, since at his death in 1872—although he was succeeded as President by his



chief follower, Sebastian Lerdo de Tejada, also a prominent Freemason—dissensions arose, and they fell asunder, Alfredo Chavero becoming Grand Master of the Grand Orient, and Jose Maria Mateos of the National Grand Lodge.”\*

General Francisco Javier Mina, another martyr to Mexican liberty, was a Freemason. Ignacio Comonfort, also a member of the Fraternity, was Secretary of War under President Alvarez and later was acting President of the Republic. He took an active part against the French invasion, but was killed by bandits or irregular troops in 1863.

General Porfirio Diaz was an early supporter of Juarez, under whose influence he became a member of the Masonic Fraternity. He attained the 33° and was Sovereign Grand Commander of the Supreme Council of Mexico for many years. He was succeeded by his friend, General Manuel Gonzales, 33°, in 1880. Diaz was elected President in 1884 and remained in office until his resignation in 1911. General Mariano Escobedo, a close friend of Juarez and Diaz, was also a Mason and a member of the Supreme Council of Mexico.†

### *Recent Mystical Movements*

The recent activities of the older Secret Societies, with one or two notable exceptions, is difficult to trace. Numerous Orders, Fraternities, Societies, and cults have come into existence, many claiming an honorable antiquity, but few in a position to prove their claims to those of scholarly inclination. These recent movements may be broadly considered as revivals of old learning, but when their pretensions are seriously investigated, the findings are inconclusive. For this reason it seems wiser to refrain from passing

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\*See revised edition by Robert Ingham Clegg, 33°.

†See *Montana Mason*, Feb. 1922, article "Masonry in Mexico."



judgment upon any of them. Even the most sincere efforts to clarify the situation would result in unfortunate animosities. Those addicted to the numerous sects are generally more devout than analytical, and nothing would be gained by offending the devotees of any religious persuasion.

The difficulty of tracing historical descents is also increased by the innumerable divisions which arose in the American religious life. The rise of science undermined the larger institutions of theology and induced thoughtful persons to seek spiritual consolation in movements offering broader and deeper interpretations of rituals and dogmas. As the demand increased, the supply correspondingly enlarged until the boundaries of orthodoxy lost definition. The 19th-century intellectual became a freethinker, convinced that his own judgment was superior to that of the clergy. The freethinker was neither an agnostic nor an atheist; he was a liberal, convinced that freedom included the privilege of questioning authority, both sacred and profane. Emancipation, however, was a mixed blessing. It was one thing to escape old superstitions, and quite another thing to be wise enough not to fall into new errors. Many beliefs that flourished for a time were slight improvements, but had the virtue of being different, if not better.

As may be expected, there was a luxurious growth of absurd notions. They flourished upon the prevailing ignorance, but having no roots in good soil, these parasitical cults were fascinating but ineffective. The more bizarre were short-lived or survived only at the expense of the credulous. Substantially, the citizens of the 19th century received as a legacy the principles and convictions of the 18th-century political societies. The Age of Reason had secured the rights of man. It then remained for education to provide the machinery required to protect those rights. Democracy had emerged as fact, but the fact was not suffi-

cient. The theory of freedom could be preserved by Secret Societies, but the practice of freedom required the co-operation of an enlightened people dedicated to a lofty ethical standard.

When evaluating the esoteric groups of this period, the most reliable guide is their acceptance of the responsibility of the Great Plan. Progress is not ordinarily for the advancement of the individual, but for the unfoldment of the universal project. The real Esoteric Schools still labor toward the goal of the World Commonwealth. The Plan remains utopian, and the disciple advancing through the grades of a legitimate initiate-system is being prepared, not for personal emancipation, but as an instrument for the liberation of his fellow men. Wherever religious inducements are personal and selfish or the devotee is encouraged to advance his own growth without consideration for others, there is something wrong with the policy of the sect. Yet, the literature of modern metaphysical movements seldom emphasizes growth as responsibility. The reader is encouraged to study mystical systems or to affiliate with organizations claiming extraordinary knowledge in the hope that he will acquire the skill to advance his own condition. Where such objectives are used to intrigue the gullible, those of sincere mind and heart are entitled to reservations.

The old Secret Societies remain as they had always been, custodians of an overconviction. They are now emphasizing the right use of privileges. Education can be conferred by schools and universities, but enlightenment must still result from internal growth. Without the proper development of his superphysical resources, the individual cannot protect his physical rights and privileges. Progress of society always demands that the human being as a person be in advance of the institutions which he creates. When leadership passes to the keeping of external enterprises, the



person becomes a slave to his own project. This is not the Plan, and if the condition continues uncorrected, physical society will collapse upon the individual, burying him beneath the debris of his own productions.

With the rise of materialism, the Secret Societies were concealed from the profane, not by any elaborate machinery of their own, but by popular disbelief. There was no place for sacred institutions in minds already dedicated to scientific skepticism. The importance of invisible principles over visible purposes and ambitions was simply ignored. Only that small minority which remained true to a higher standard of values continued to be concerned with inevitable outcome. For the majority, the physical world with its wonders was sufficient to absorb all available time and interest. The result is obvious. The physical state of man enlarged, and his ethical horizons were appropriately narrowed.

The old adversaries were gone. The power of the Church and State to plague the destiny of the average man was broken. It was no longer needful to struggle against the despotism of feudalism or the perversities of princes. The Inquisition had lost its terror, and theology was unable to impose its traditional formulas upon a down-trodden laity. But the ills that men must bear changed their appearances, not their substance. The authority of science took the place left vacant by the departing authorities of aristocracy and theology. It was still necessary for the human spirit to struggle against the intolerances of the human mind.

Personal ambitions, liberated by the new code of freedom, immediately began to dream of supremacy. A vast concept, highly competitive in principle and highly destructive in practice, perpetuated most of the instruments of the old tyranny. Siegfried had slain the dragon, but was in



grave danger of being drowned in the blood that flowed from the mortal wound. Having overcome the despotism of entrenched classes, humanity discovered the despotism in itself. It was faced with the unhappy realization that tyrannical systems are only symbols of those tyrannical instincts which exist in all creatures until they are overcome by enlightened understanding.



—From Hunt's *History of the Seal of the United States*

#### THE REVERSE OF THE GREAT SEAL

Professor Charles Eliot Norton of Harvard described the design thus: "The device adopted by Congress is practically incapable of effective treatment; it can hardly (however artistically treated by the designer) look otherwise than as a dull emblem of a Masonic fraternity." This is one of the important esoteric landmarks that have been conveniently ignored.

It is evident that the continued operations of the genuine Secret Societies make it unwise to describe them or identify their members. Humanity has not yet reached a state of collective security in which leadership beyond the political sphere is unnecessary. The need for guidance actually increases with the complexity of mundane affairs. All of sincere heart find consolation in the conviction that powers beyond and above human corruption continue to administer the destiny of the globe. It would be a mistake to confuse this governing body with the various sects which pretend to authority, but give no indications or proof that they can manage efficiently even their own affairs.

Those sensitive to subtle values will find positive indications of fortuitous intervention if they care to seek for them. The landmarks are not obvious to the profane, but years of familiarity with the proportions of the project enable the thoughtful to recognize the systematic unfoldment of the Great Plan. The truth is more obvious among those peoples whose religions acknowledge the existence of an invisible government. This has always been concealed in the descent of the Western Mystery religion.

Once Christianity had rejected paganism, it refused to recognize the Esoteric Orders of the pre-Christian world. It regarded them as detrimental to its own prestige, and sought relentlessly to exterminate them. This was impossible, but the Church refused to accept and to teach a universal religion or a universal philosophy. The spiritual mysteries of life belong to no one faith, race, or school. In order to advance itself as the supreme custodian of salvation, ecclesiasticism had to reject the Mystery system. In doing so, it did not destroy that system, but forfeited its own place as an instrument for the fulfillment of the Great Plan. In its effort to usurp this high destiny for itself, the Church obscured the very essentials of human progress and discouraged its followers from those noble and unselfish convictions which might long ago have supplied the incentives for a Universal Reformation of mankind.

When legitimate authority passed from the Church to the Orders of the Quest, this secret ecclesia drew to itself those who truly loved mankind. Even with the passing of centuries, the rift has not been mended. Theological groups still emphasize a personal salvation achieved by miraculous means. In this case, the very word *miraculous* stands for the rejected esoteric tradition. It is the undefined and, for the theological, undefinable science of human regeneration. It is not sufficient to say that beyond the Church is only

the unknown sphere of God. Actually, beyond the Church are the Mysteries, guarded by the shepherds of men. There is nothing that can limit the merit of present action more completely than lack of vision about accumulative consequences of action. Humanity can release itself from defeatism only when the true proportions of the Great Plan are at least partly perceived. The lack of the realization of high purpose contributes to the cultivation of less desirable motives and inclinations.

The Secret Societies are now engaged upon a broad reformation of the world-educational concept. The great universities and schools must fulfill the destiny which conceived them and sustained them through long and troublous times. Humanity cannot be preserved by the three "R's," unless the universal truths locked within the forms of the arts and sciences are released. Just as mysticism once opened and revealed the secrets of religion, so it must now open and reveal the secrets of the sciences. Forms must give up the spirits locked within them, otherwise the seeds cannot grow and bear their proper fruit. The great tree, which is knowledge, with its twelve branches, is for the healing of the nations. Who shall say that it has revealed the fullness of its benefits?

The forces opposing the essential progress of humanity are always embodiments of the three great enemies: ignorance, superstition, and fear. As man advances in his collective evolution, these negative obstacles supply a necessary incentive for individual improvement toward collective security. Ignorance is the state of insufficient knowledge. The concept is relative, but sufficient knowledge is that which is superior to whatever circumstances may prevail. Superstition is addiction to that which is untrue. The prevailing superstition is the acceptance of materialism, an acceptance which is indefensible and un-



demonstrable. Fear is man's anxiety over the consequences of his own actions, becoming the victim of the collective conduct of his own kind. Until every possible interpretation of the qualities of the three adversaries have been exhausted, the work of human enlightenment must continue.

In each generation, the adept-teacher must be out of sympathy with the prevailing abuses. He must always oppose entrenched corruption and strive against what has been called the static of masses. Human behavior corrupted by false doctrines resents its own benefactors. The Secret Societies are champions of progress through constructive change, but men fear change and doubt progress. Destiny, however, conspires against the permanence of insufficient institutions. Growth is natural to the wise, and inevitable for the foolish. Conditions beyond human control are forever breaking down the limitations which man has placed upon his own future. Destiny and the Mysteries must win, for they are on the side of the Great Plan.

As that which is necessary always provides the means for supplying its own necessity, the human state proves the esoteric tradition. It is not conceivable that there should be laws in space for which there are no channels of release in human society. Truth always comes to man through man. The great initiate-teachers have offered their own souls as channels for the distribution of cosmic truths. These teachers are not only unselfish, they are also adequate for the ministry which is their chosen task. Through long periods of discipleship, they have become learned in statescraft, in law, medicine, art, literature, and science. In their natures, philosophy and mysticism have been unfolded far beyond the understanding of the profane. Obviously, the Great Schools, functioning through their trained and appointed messengers, constitute the highest leadership available to man or required by man. In order, however, that

their work be accomplished it is not sufficient that they have the needed vision. This vision must be communicated. It must be extended throughout human society until humanity redeems itself by the experience of enlightenment. The security that the world seeks cannot be bestowed; it must be earned. When a sufficient number has attained this degree of true leadership, the imperishable democracy of the sages will become a fact in the mortal sphere.

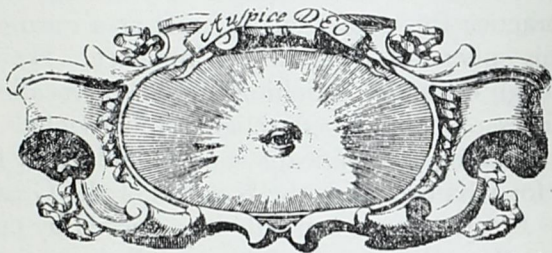
The genuine Esoteric Associations always required that disciples prepare themselves for careers of practical service. The student was expected to attain to a state of unusual skill or proficiency in some branch of learning. He was then to practice this profession or craft as a means of extending his sphere of constructive influence. He was to teach through example, enriching his chosen vocation with the overtones of enlightened religious philosophy. Thus, gradually creating a significant zone of influence, he was available for whatever task the Keepers of the Great Plan required. Practical ends can only be achieved by practical means, and the agents of the Universal Reformation must be sufficient for every emergency.

Rather than attempt to indicate modern organizations which may or may not be instruments of the Mystery system, it is more useful to recommend that each truth seeker make use of his own faculties of discrimination. The Esoteric Orders have never accepted candidates without reasonable qualifications, nor have they offered any inducements except the privilege of becoming unselfish, useful, and humble. They have never promised to gratify the whims of mortals, and have reserved the right to select in their own way those whom they believed to have the courage, the insight, and the fortitude which the magnitude of the project demanded. Human society cannot be preserved by Fraternities of the unfit, even though the members be well-intentioned. Suc-



cessful leaders in various materialistic fields usually lack qualifications essential for discipleship in the Secret Schools. Those aspiring to become initiate-teachers must discipline and improve their abilities before their candidacy can be considered.

Those initiates of the Western descent whose names are known convey a fair impression of acceptable qualifications. Such men as Roger Bacon, Francis of Assisi, Dante, Paracelsus, Basil Valentine, Robert Fludd, Francis Bacon, and St.-Germain immediately recall the remarkable abilities, the wonderful devotion, and the enduring fortitude of those



—From an 18th-century Hermetic Book

#### A SYMBOLICAL PRINTER'S DEVICE

This vignette is a pictorial signature of the  
Secret Societies of Liberty.

who resolved to devote their lives to the improvement of mankind. Quiet thinking will dissolve all doubts as to the genuine teachings of the Mystery Schools and the qualifications necessary to membership. Usually, the Schools selected their disciples, imposing upon them rules of discrimination and discretion, so that no matter of importance was entrusted to anyone still plagued by his own ambitions or likely to succumb to the temptations of worldly acclaim.

The principal test of existing religious and mystical organizations is, therefore, their practical acceptance of



collective responsibility. If the group is concerned primarily with the perpetuation of its own abstract doctrines and has provided no means for the direct application of these doctrines for the advancement of all men, something is wrong. Wisdom is not destined for the few. Certainly, it must be given to a few, that through them it may be taught to the many. Any group which imposes artificial limitations of prejudice, bigotry, or intellectual exclusiveness frustrates the legitimate program of universal enlightenment. No one religion, philosophy, sect, or creed will ever be the sole custodian of the esoteric tradition. Organizations pretending to provide the "only hope of salvation" can be immediately discarded. The Great Plan has taken on innumerable appearances that meet the requirements of human evolution, but the Plan itself is beyond all appearances. Many have the privilege of serving, but only the divine wisdom itself has the authority to dogmatize, and it has never indulged that prerogative.

The design is not difficult to visualize if the mind and heart are properly receptive. The religions, philosophies, sciences, and arts of mankind are all ensouled organisms. They grow up in the world, like flowers in a field, all nourished by the same light and moisture. It profits nothing to argue as to which of these flowers is the fairest or which is the most likely to survive, nor is it more practical to debate such issues as which shrub was predestined to govern the others. All are channels for the one life, which alone determines the fulfillment of the processes of growth. The separate organisms of learning must finally come together to form one vast organization. If one part be lacking, the body will be imperfect. Who shall say in a magnificent association of this kind that any of the fragments which form the perfect whole is unessential? Remember, the Great League of Learning is a democratic commonwealth